WILLIAM R. POLK

AUTHOR OF *UNDERSTANDING IRAN*

CRUSADE AND JIHAD

THE THOUSAND-YEAR WAR BETWEEN THE MUSLIM WORLD AND THE GLOBAL NORTH

VISIT...

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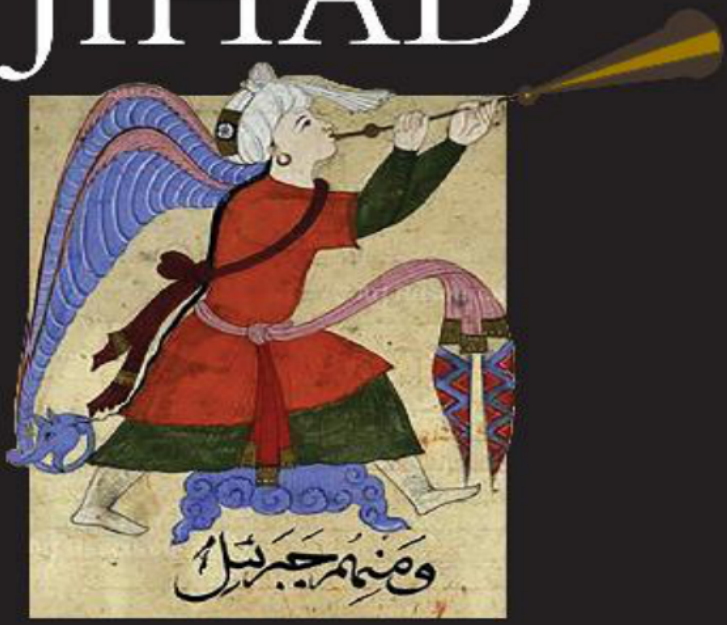

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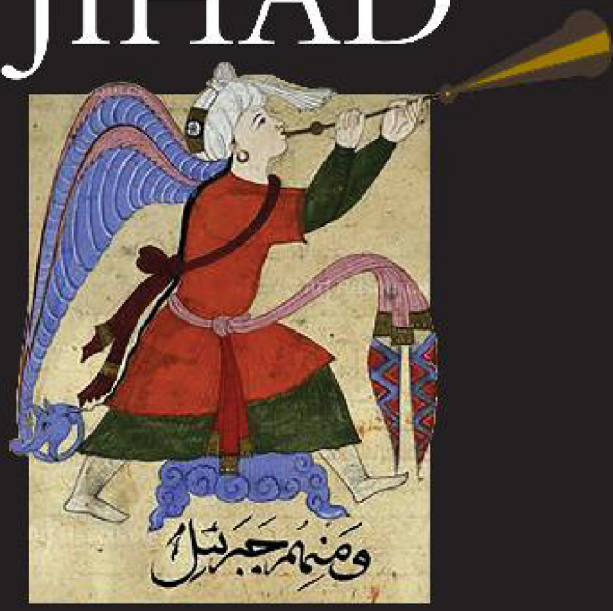

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THE HENRY L. STIMSON LECTURES SERIES

Crusade and Jihad

THE THOUSAND-YEAR WAR BETWEEN THE MUSLIM WORLD AND THE GLOBAL NORTH

William R. Polk

Yale UNIVERSITY PRESS

New Haven & London

The Henry L. Stimson Lectures at the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies at Yale.

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Maps by Mary Tiegreen.

Set in Adobe Garamond type by Westchester Publishing Services.
Printed in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017942543
ISBN 978-0-300-22290-6 (hardcover: alk. paper)
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

This paper meets the requirements of ANSI/NISO Z39.48-1992 (Permanence of Paper).

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

For Landrum Bolling
A lifelong seeker of peace and understanding,
a Friend and a friend,
a truly great human being

And for Hassan Fathy
Architect for the poor who taught those who would
listen how to meet their need for shelter in beauty
with the soil under their feet

To be ignorant of the past is to be forever a child.

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

The destruction of the past is one of the most characteristic and eerie phenomena of the late 20th century. Most young men and women at the century's end grow up in a sort of permanent present lacking any organic relation to the public past of the times they live in.

ERIC HOBSBAWM, "The Short 20th Century,"
Independent on Sunday, October 9, 1994

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Introduction

I believe that an author owes his reader several obligations. First, he should reveal how he learned what he writes. Second, he should say why what he writes about is worth reading. Third, he should provide a sort of roadmap on the themes that tie together the events he describes. And fourth, he should make clear the theses he puts forward. Here I will try to honor my obligations to you.

I am writing from the perspective of nearly seventy years of research and observation. I have lived in or visited the countries I examine and have had the opportunity to discuss their inhabitants' thoughts and actions with a number of leaders, journalists, academics, government officials, and such wise observers as taxi drivers and shopkeepers.

My vision has been affected, for better or for worse, by studying at a number of universities—including Oxford, Harvard, the American University of Beirut, and the University of Baghdad—teaching students and interacting with colleagues at Harvard and the University of Chicago and lecturing or attending conferences and symposiums at more than twenty other American universities and such organizations as the Council on Foreign Relations, the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House), Sciences Po, the Institute of World Economy and International Affairs of the (then) Soviet Academy of Sciences, the Middle East Institute, the American Association of Middle Eastern Studies, St. Antony's College, Oxford, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Ventilating my opinions among them brought forth suggestions and criticisms that have been of great value in the refinement of my own.

As president of the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs, I had sustained contact over years with the institute's fellows. They included men and women of extraordinary experience and great knowledge, including former UN secretary general U Thant, Lord Caradon of the British Foreign Office, soon-to-be prime minister Evgeni Primakov of Russia, former deputy prime minister Abdel Keyeum of Afghanistan, former foreign minister of Ghana Fed Arkhurst, former commander of the UN Emergency Force (UNEF) General Indar Rikkye, former vice president of the Inter-American Development Bank and later mayor of Bogota Enrique Peñalosa,

founder and head of the UN Environment Program Maurice Strong, Governor Pat Brown of California, and nearly a hundred others. They generously shared their experiences with me. The institute was what a research center should be—a multiyear intellectual feast to which everyone brings a "dish" and at which everyone tastes all the dishes. I profited far more than I gave.

Among the journalists who have been close friends and with whom I exchanged ideas and information were Said Aburish, Michael Adams, Uri Avnery, John Cooley, Charles Glass, Johannes Gross, David Halberstam, Seymour Hersh, Peter Jennings, Murray Kempton, William Pfaff, Jon Randal, Eric Rouleau, Peter Scholl-Latour, Patrick Seale, Neil Sheehan, and Howard K. Smith. They enormously broadened the range of my contacts and kept me up to date.

During my four years of government service, as a member of the Policy Planning Council, I benefited from frequent exchanges with practically every senior member of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and particularly with McGeorge Bundy and Robert Komer of the National Security Council; Governor Chet Bowles, Governor Averill Harriman, Roger Hilsman, Thomas Hughes, Walt Rostow, and James Spain at the State Department; Sherman Kent at the Office of National Estimates at the CIA; Fowler Hamilton and his staff at USAID; and William Bundy and Robert McNamara at the Defense Department. I also worked with a number of senators, including Frank Church, Thomas Eagleton, William Fulbright, Hubert Humphrey, and George McGovern; in the House with John Brademas; and with Supreme Court justices William Douglas and Abe Fortes.

Both in government and in my personal capacity, I was fortunate to deal with and get to know a range of kings, presidents, prime ministers, and other officials, as well as scholars, journalists, and businessmen of the countries I address in this book.

Over the years, I have written a number of books that were, incidentally, background studies for this book. They include *The United States and the Arab World; Neighbors and Strangers: The Fundamentals of Foreign Affairs; Understanding Iraq; Understanding Iran; The Elusive Peace: The Middle East in the Twentieth Century; Violent Politics: Guerrilla Warfare and Terrorism; Distant Thunder: Reflections on the Dangers of Our Times; Humpty Dumpty: The Fate of Regime Change;* and others.

I wrote this book because I find that none of the books now available deals comprehensively with the Muslim world and its encounters with the former imperial states. Each deals with parts of them. This is not a criticism; I have done the same. But narrowing the focus necessarily misses the overview. So here I have set out to deal with the whole Muslim world and its relationship with what I call "the

North of the world." This is what Muslims themselves do. They are aware of shared experiences and the interconnected nature of their lives. The reader will see that experiences have been shared from Morocco to Indonesia and from Bukhara to Nigeria. This has always typified the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca, the hajj, the gathering of the people of the Muslim world. The sharing of ideas and experiences took on a new dimension in the nineteenth century with the advent of the press, magazines, and broadsheets. Today it is most evident in the movement of *mujahidin.* Men and women from all over the Muslim world engage in actions far from their native lands. Juxtaposing the different parts of the Muslim world brings out a new dimension of their separate and collective experiences.

In my quest for understanding—not necessarily agreement but always understanding—I have tried to be comprehensive when being so elucidates the main theme but have tried not to wander into digressions that add little. In short, I have tried to differentiate the *necessary* from the merely *interesting.* Since so much of the history of recent times is filled with conflict between European powers and Muslim societies, I give enough information in short synopses to set each insurgency in context and make clear what provoked it and how the two sides reacted.

The following is a sort of roadmap to the subjects and themes I address.

Part 1 describes both the advent of Islam in a remote desert of Arabia and its development into one of the great religious movements of all time. I show how a tribal society was unified by Muhammad and in the seventh century was turned into a force that conquered the two superpowers of its time, Byzantium (or eastern Rome) and Sasanian Iran. In turn, it established great centers of a new civilization from Spain to India. They were the glory of the Middle Ages. But, as they lost their vigor and splintered, they were nearly overwhelmed by the Mongol invasion under Genghis Khan and his successors in the thirteenth century. From defeat and destruction, they attempted to find their way back to the original creed and simultaneously recast their religion in Sufism.

In Part 1, I also introduce the overarching theme of the book: the conflict, long in existence and still present to this day, between the North (the relatively rich, advanced, and formerly imperial powers) and the South (the relatively poor, traditional, mostly former colonial peoples—here, specifically those of the Muslim world). I focus here on the nature of imperialism and on how the South has acted or reacted to it.

I give short historical synopses because the experiences of the peoples of the South are not generally known among us in the North.

Even in our study of history, we are children of the movies. They have proven to be far better communicators than textbooks. Indeed, the movies often provide the only history we know. But they come at a price: they simplify and distort, so what we get is often a false impression. When we think of the century of warfare on the Northwest Frontier (the unconquered area between Afghanistan and Pakistan), we are guided by Rudyard Kipling. It is Sean Connery as "the man who would be king," not the people he would rule, who catches our attention. In Morocco it is Gary Cooper in *Beau Geste.* We all know that the Arab struggle for independence was the work of Peter O'Toole's *Lawrence of Arabia.* In *Black Hawk Down,* our decent, brave, clean-cut young men valiantly defended themselves against vicious hordes of savages.

It is not easy for us in the North to understand history as experienced by the peoples of the South. Drama requires heroes, and those we remember are our people, not theirs. They are the fanatics; the sinister, dark people; the benighted natives; a mass, not individuals. The only exception I can think of is Anthony Quinn's portrayal of the great Libyan guerrilla leader Umar al-Mukhtar, who struggled against and was hanged by Benito Mussolini's Italian Fascists. Al-Mukhtar was, in fact, one of many heroes of the peoples of the South. So, as we look at our shared past, we in the North see a different pattern from that seen in the South. I try here to bring them back to life so as to understand the history of their peoples.

Academicians may dismiss this focus on popular entertainment. But even when scholars set about their serious endeavors, they also, at least until recently, took a "Northern" view. Most academicians in America and the European countries more or less put the South out of their minds and kept it out of the minds of their students. To be concerned with it, study it, and learn the languages of Asians and Africans was to be professionally sidelined. I saw this when I returned to Harvard University to study for my doctorate and to teach in the late 1950s. I found that mainline scholars regarded area studies, even those dealing with modern Russia and China, as aberrations, to be indulged in but not taken seriously. What mattered was Europe and America. Even historians whose countries were deeply involved in imperialism hardly noticed the natives. Observe this in William Langer's seminal book, *Imperialism.* For him, imperialism was a branch of diplomatic history, and diplomacy was what happened among Europeans. People in the South, the natives, were *objects* of European imperialism or colonialism, not themselves *actors* on the world stage.

Of course, much has changed over the last half century. Younger scholars are more literate in other languages than was my generation. While few institutions then offered more than elementary Arabic,

today the range of languages has increased to include Turkish, Persian, Kurdish, Berber, Urdu, Pashto, and others. Being able to access the thought of the people has given a new depth to scholarly inquiry. What then seemed quite revolutionary is now routine or even passé. Programs on other cultures were then rare; today they are offered in at least a hundred colleges and universities in America and have also been created in overseas locations where students (and faculty) can benefit from contact with the people whose cultures they are studying. When a small group of colleagues and I started the American Middle Eastern Studies Association, we were about a dozen; today the organization numbers nearly three thousand.

Today, we also read more of what people of the South write. A part of my own work at both Harvard and the University of Chicago and in the many institutions in which I lectured was to try to bring a more balanced view into play. After all, getting a sense of balance should be the aim of the historian. So in this book, I have tried to bring out not only what *we* were doing but also what *they* were doing and saying.

That understanding is not the same as agreement. There is much that is ugly on both sides of the conflict between North and South. I do not airbrush the record. I give it warts and all. And there are many warts—bombings, extrajudicial killings, torture, imprisonment for years without trial, starvation—on both sides. Failure to see the whole record would be a failure of humanity, but it also leads us away from peace and security toward perpetual war and fear. We need to heed the whole record if we hope ever to achieve world security at an affordable cost. I believe that the quest for honesty is both morally and intellectually required. So, in Part 1, I give a realistic portrait. To get at the views of the record that determine our actions and theirs, I juxtapose the sometimes exaggerated memories Muslims retain of their great days and the reality of the stunning advent of imperialism.

Part 2 shows how, initially, Muslims tried to cope with the new world in which they found themselves in the nineteenth century both by reasserting their traditions and by organizing their defense on the basis of their religion. I explain here what the most influential brand of traditional Islam means and its relevance to our times.

My second theme comes into play here: the remarkable uniformity, over the broad landscape of Asia and Africa, of what Muslims tried to do and what they experienced. I portray the several major resistance movements—the early nineteenth-century attempt by the Albanian ruler of Egypt, Mehmet Ali, to create a state that could defend itself economically and militarily against Britain; Amir Abd al-Qadir's Algerians, who battled French colonists; the Caucasian followers of Imam Shamil, who tried to defend themselves against Russian imperialism; the Indian Sepoy soldiers, who fought against their

British masters; the Indonesians of Aceh and Java, who battled the Dutch imperialists; the Sudanese Mahdiyah, who fought the British invaders; the Libyan Sanusiyah, who battled Mussolini's Fascists; and Amir Muhammad bin Abd al-Karim al-Khattabi's Berbers, who fought for independence from the Spaniards. Here too I deal with that remarkable political missionary and religious subversive, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, who energized a whole generation of Muslims all over Africa and Asia.

Here also I announce the third theme: the attempts of Muslim thinkers to figure out why these revolts failed. Essentially, they argued over whether the failure was due to Islam itself. Some argued (and some of their successors are still arguing) that the cause was the perversion of Islam by the growth of a sterile religious bureaucracy that lost touch with the spirit of the religion. Some believed that they had to go back to the "pure" or "fundamental" religion announced by the Prophet Muhammad. Others argued that Islam was simply irrelevant to the task of defense. A few embraced what they understood of the North to become "modern." But the drift was toward finding a new ideology. This leads me to Part 3.

In Part 3, I deal with the Muslim recognition that, as practiced and as conceived, Islam did not suffice to stop the European powers from invading and occupying their lands, so many turned to the ideology that was then sweeping Europe—nationalism. We see this in a range of movements, including the first Iranian Revolution; Arab actions in the First World War; the beginning of Palestinian opposition to Zionism; the reshaping of Turkey by Atatürk and Iran by Reza Shah; Indian Muslim nationalism leading to the formation of Pakistan; Kashmir's attempt to rejoin the Muslim world; the Malay emphasis on ethnicity; Afghan tribal nationalism in the struggle against Britain, Russia, and America; Gamal Abdel Nasser's new brand of nationalism, Arabiyah; the rise of the Baathists and those influenced by *qawmiyah* (ethnic nationalism) in Iraq, Syria, and Libya; and the Algerian guerrilla war against the French. Part 3 ends with the general disillusionment with secular nationalism. It had failed to create a shield for the South.

In Part 4, I show how Muslims tried to pick up the pieces of their defeat by returning to Islam—but to a different concept of Islam, militant Islam. Militancy had always been a part of the tradition of Islam, as it was in both Christianity and Judaism. But over the long span of history, it was only occasionally the aspect of religion that was predominant. Muslims, particularly Arab Muslims, have rediscovered it and emphasized what the Israelis have called "muscular" religion.

In Part 4 I also announce my fourth theme: the general tendency of military defeats to produce chaos but fail to resolve the causes of the

conflicts, so that issues, ideas, angers, hopes, actions, and reactions often repeat themselves a generation or so later and often in a more violent form.

Here, I deal with the challenge posed to the states, which were created, imposed, or allowed by the former imperial and colonial powers and by nongovernmental groups. Beginning with the Palestinian reaction to Zionist expulsion and colonialism, I move into religiously based groups like Hamas and Hizbullah; the birth of the Central Asian Uyghur nation; the stirring of the disinherited Moros of the Philippines; and the fury of the Somalis who saw their single natural resource raped by illegal fishing and fought back with piracy and terrorism.

This account prepares the way for me to focus in Part 5 on the model of the Muslim Brotherhood; the philosophy of the most influential modern thinker on Islamic fundamentalism, Sayyid Qutb; and the creation of a new strategy in al-Qaida and more recently in the Islamic State and affiliated movements in Africa and Asia.

I end with an afterword in which I tie the separate experiences over the last two centuries into a coherent whole. I attempt to show the meaning of this slice of history. And, above all, I ask, what options do the peoples of the South and those of us in the North have to try to restore the security I experienced as a young man, and how can we do this at an affordable cost?

The broad approach used here brings out the reality of Afro-Asian politics. Writing it was not just an academic exercise. I urge you to consider that the forces I here analyze will play a major role in determining the outcome of the great issue of our times: how we and our grandchildren, both Northerners and Southerners, can live together on one earth.

PART ONE

Glorious Memories and Agonizing Awakening

Central to the experience of the people of the Muslim world, the *Dar al-Islam,* is their religion. Islam is not just an abstract creed but rather a pattern of life that is manifested from the cradle to the grave and permeates every aspect of daily living. It created great civilizations throughout a vast stretch of southern Europe, northern Africa, and Asia. Memories of its great days shape current political thought and set a standard against which contemporary actions are judged. Without an understanding of it—and also of modern Muslims' often exaggerated appreciation of it—the present is incomprehensible.

What has been called the "impact of the West" damaged and nearly destroyed the Muslim self-image and also many of the institutions of Islamic society. It posed a challenge against which Muslims from Nigeria to Bukhara and from Somalia to Albania have struggled for centuries. While the governments and peoples of Europe and America have seen their intrusion into the Muslim world as what the French called a civilizing mission, *la mission civilisatrice,* the peoples of the South have seen it as a brutal invasion in which millions of their peoples were killed. Thus, a failure to understand the Muslim view of imperialism and colonialism also makes an understanding of contemporary events at best only partial and will make the achievement of peace and stability virtually impossible.

These two tasks—understanding the Muslim view of their own past and understanding their view of their encounter with the West—is the purpose of Part 1.

CHAPTER 1

The Social, Economic, and Cultural Bases of Islam

Along the "waist" of Earth, cinched by the equator, peoples traditionally lived in societies that organized themselves by kinship. They were nomadic or seminomadic. We describe their societies as tribal and held together by ties of kinship. It was not until about five thousand years ago that the Agricultural Revolution made settlement on a large scale possible, at which point some peoples began to define their relationships by geography rather than genetics. That transformation depended on the availability of water and so only sporadically affected the mainly dry band of the middle portion of Earth, where fixed congregation was possible only by the occasional oases and rivers. Most inhabitants of the dry land continued to live in small societies, and most had to be either nomadic or seminomadic. It was in this environment that Islam was proclaimed in the seventh century.

The harbingers of Islam, the Arabs, are torn in their attitudes toward their identity in the era before the coming of Islam. On one hand, they regard it as the time of "ignorance of God's way" (the *Jahaliyah*), but on the other hand, they are proud of the magnificent body of poetry that pagan bedouin created. That poetry is comparable, in both quality and quantity, to the best of Greek, English, and Russian literature. Still today, a millennium and a half after it was composed, classical Arabic poetry is the national treasure of the Arabs and is relished even by illiterate tribesmen. On many desert evenings, I have participated in poetry "duels" around campfires with herdsmen whose counterparts in the West, the cowboys I knew in my youth in Texas, would never in their lives have recited a poem. Among Arabs, and those they influenced, their poetry exerts an almost hypnotic spell.

Classical poetry virtually created the Arabic language. Because it is the language in which Islam is preserved and that has shaped Berber,

Persian, Urdu, Indonesian, Malay, Pashto, and Turkish, among other languages, it is useful to see how it works and how it embodies thoughts and attitudes.

First, Arabic has been "locked." Today's formal written Arabic is essentially the same language sung by the sixth-century poets. This is not true of English. Today's English readers have trouble understanding Shakespeare, and practically none of us could understand the language that would have been spoken around King Arthur's Round Table. In contrast, modern Arabs delight in the poetry and prose of bedouin who lived at the same time as King Arthur.

Second, Arabic, along with English, is one of the world's richest languages. But whereas English has incorporated vocabulary from dozens of other languages, Arabic is almost entirely self-proliferating. It grows its vocabulary by "multiplying" basic concepts called "roots." A root, which signals an idea or an action, is embodied in three or four consonants. The concept is then evolved in a uniform pattern into a variety of "elevated" forms that signal nuances or bring forward related notions without losing the basic meaning.

How that works is illustrated in a playful little exercise I have related to generations of students. It was created during the Second World War by some unremembered but worthy Englishman who had the task of teaching Arabic to British intelligence officers. To catch their attention, the teacher took the three consonants most familiar to them, *G, H,* and *Q* (which together stand for General Headquarters), and used them to explain how the Arabic system works. Putting the three letters on a fixed template yields precise nuances of the original idea and multiplies the vocabulary manifold. So, the instructor said,

"to serve in GHQ" is GaHaQa
"to work hard in GHQ" is GaHHaQa
"to appoint someone to GHQ" is GáHaQa
"to refer something to GHQ" is aGHaQa
"to appoint oneself to GHQ" is taGaHHaQa
"to appoint one another to GHQ" is taGáHaQa
"to be appointed to GHQ" is inGaHaQa
"to become active in GHQ" is iGtaHaQa
"to seek an appointment in GHQ" is istaGHaQa

Any root can be put into this pattern to express intensity, passivity, reciprocity, conveyance, or self-interest in whatever the original root denotes. And from this pattern also come various nouns. So the instructor would see maGHaQa as the *place* where GHQ was situated, a muGHiQ would be a *member* of GHQ, and miGHaQ would be its *instrument,* the intelligence analysis GHQ produced.

Of course, GHQ is a spoof, but it demonstrates the template that made Arabic precise enough and flexible enough to pick up Indian science and Greek philosophy and convey them to Europe to stimulate the great cultural movement we call the Renaissance.

Third, the words that ancient poets used to describe life in the desert are elaborated to fit modern concepts. For example, the root "WFQ" embodies the idea of "camels marching in a file." They are doing what they should be doing, and from this comes the idea of doing or being helped to do something at the right time or in a suitable fashion. For example, the verb "WaFaQa" today means "to conciliate disagreeing parties," "to negotiate a ceasefire," "to make a treaty," "to succeed in an endeavor," "to request God's help," "to have good luck," "to be a friend," "to fit (clothing)," "to be a common divider (mathematics)," "to be agreeable (climate)," "to balance (weights)," "to be wholesome (food)," "to work for wages," and "to be authorized." But, going back to the origin, it still means "to fit an arrow to a bowstring." In short, it means "doing all the right things." Communicating in Arabic sometimes, particularly to foreign students, seems like playing Scrabble or doing crossword puzzles.

Anchored in its roots and fixed in its matrix, Arabic did for Islam what Greek and Latin did for Christianity and Hebrew did for Judaism. It is the language in which the Quran was written. Translation of the Quran into other languages was long frowned on and has become common only within the last century. Muslims everywhere are at least exposed to Arabic, and religious students (*taliban*), regardless of their native language, devote themselves to memorizing the Quran in Arabic. From this study and from widespread commerce, Arabic has "infected" local languages and dialects all over the world. Even languages in families other than the Semitic family (which includes both Arabic and Hebrew), such as Indo-European (including English, French, German, Spanish, Persian, and Russian), Tamazight (Berber), Austroasian (Malay, Indonesian, and Tagalog), and Ural-Altaic (Turkish and Mongol), have borrowed freely from Arabic. Pronunciation varies, but the written forms are largely mutually understandable. Loan words spread through Berber, Hawsa, Kanuri, Swahili, Somali, Kurdish, Farsi, Urdu, Pashto, Malay, Balinisian, Tajik, Uzbek, Uyghur, Ottoman Turkish, and Spanish. Even English has a few. The following is how a "teach yourself" language book might show a few of the loan words from Arabic we unconsciously use:

> So the *admiral* left the *arsenal* and lay down on a *mattress* beside the *sofa* under an *alcove* made of *adobe* while reading a book on *chemistry.* He covered himself with a *cotton* blanket, but when he got tired, he tried to *decipher* another book on *algebra* while eating an *apricot*—or was it a *tangerine?* It

certainly was not an *artichoke* or *spinach.* Silly man, he had too much *alcohol.* But drinking *coffee* from the *carafe* helped clear his head. Just then a passing child asked for some *candy;* so he put his hand in the *jar* but all he found was loose *sugar.* Good thing it wasn't *tobacco.*

So central is language to identity, particularly a homegrown language like Arabic, that many commentators believe the essential characteristic of being Arab is not religion or ethnicity but having Arabic as one's native language. And because the Quran is written in Arabic and is taught in religious schools throughout much of Africa and Asia and parts of Europe, Arabic is considered necessary to understanding Islam.

Consequently, we should not be surprised to find that when the Northern powers set out to conquer and control the Muslim South, they saw Arabic as a sort of defensive wall. It encircled nations and united generations. The Chinese, Russian, British, and French imperialists each tried to suppress it and to replace it with their own languages. Unintentionally they taught the natives that language could also be used defensively.

Observing that natives held defensively to their language, imperialists came to see that language could be as powerful a means of domination as armies. In the areas they dominated, the French sought to replace Arabic with French. So effective was this policy that the Algerian government that emerged from the Franco-Algerian war in 1962 was said to have contained only one cabinet minister who was fluent in Arabic.[1] To find one's way around Damascus, even a native had to know French, as all the street signs were written in it. And since laws and regulations were published in French, a native needed French to get any job above the level of a street sweeper.

The British, in their attempt to solidify the rule over India, commissioned the English historian and parliamentarian Thomas Babington Macaulay in 1835 to replace the several popular Indian languages and the Arabic and Persian used for literature, religion, and government with English. His aim was not cultural—although he famously remarked that "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia"—but rather to create "a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."[2]

In short, language was the "soft power" of imperialism. It could not completely replace military power, but it was far cheaper to employ, was difficult to oppose since it was applied to the very young, had a long-lasting effect, and was seen to be of benefit to those seeking employment. Even today, the members of the Indian ruling class strive, perhaps unconsciously, to fulfill Macaulay's vision.

The same model was taken up half a century later by the British

rulers of Egypt. After invading Egypt in 1882, the British reconstituted government schools and ordered that classes be taught in English. If a child wanted to be educated outside the village religious schools, he or she had to learn English. This program continued until just before the First World War. One of the few triumphs claimed by the Egyptian statesman Saad Zaghlul, who led his people toward independence, was getting the British to allow the Egyptians to teach their children in their own language.

To most outsiders, language seems like a weak tool for imperialists, with none of the glamor of marching armies. I confess that when I began my studies I did not appreciate how tenaciously people will rally to the defense of their native language. From the high ground of English I thought that what mattered was an idea or opinion, regardless of the language used to articulate it. I neglected the medium in favor of the message. What I did not fully understand was that it was not just abstract ideas but also the means of communication that influenced their application to politics. This was borne out to me in a 1952 conference of prominent intellectuals from a few Arab nations. Each participant felt more able to express his opinions in the language of the state that had dominated his country and in which he had studied. Thus the Iraqi participant lapsed into English, which he had learned in Oxford, while the Syrians and Lebanese reverted to the French they had acquired at the Sorbonne.[3]

Listening to their conversations, I began to realize that nationalism, a prime topic of the meeting, was not a single concept called by analogous words in different languages but a sort of “root” given different meanings by the nuances of history and culture. The conference delegates had trouble precisely understanding one another in their “native” dialects. I believe we all share their dilemma when we seek precisely to understand what people are saying in other languages. It is made much more difficult when governments seek to use language as a weapon, as the British and French and later the Russians and the Chinese did.

In dealing with the Chinese-dominated Turkish-speaking peoples of Central Asia, Chiang Kai-shek went even further than the British and French imperialists. Following revolts in 1933 by the Kazakh peoples and the proclamation in 1944 by the Uyghurs of the short-lived East Turkish Republic, Chiang decreed that there were no such people as the Turks, even though the Chinese had a name for them, *Chantou.* He said that they were just part of the “greater Chinese race.” He tried to force Turkish speakers to give up their native language and learn

Chinese. Chiang's successors in the People's Republic of China still employ his policy: they are linguistically "denationalizing" the Uyghur people.

At the same time as Chiang was suppressing the Uyghurs, Joseph Stalin was tightening the linguistic screws on the Asian peoples who had been conquered by the tsars. The better to dominate them, the Soviet Union divided what had been the common written language (Ottoman Turkish) "horizontally" by converting all written materials from the traditional (Arabic-based) script first to Latin in 1926–1927 and then to Cyrillic in 1936. The emerging generation of the 1930s thus could not read materials from its own literary and political past. The Soviets also divided the language "vertically": they abandoned the traditional written forms of words and wrote each dialect phonetically, as it was spoken, in the new scripts. The new scripts greatly increased the difficulty of communication among the Central Asians: Uzbeks could no longer read what the Tajiks or Chechens wrote. Within a generation, the only means of communication among them was through Russian.

When linguistic divide and rule was insufficient, Stalin pushed the Tatars of the Crimea toward cultural (and physical) extinction. During the Great Terror, in the 1930s, the Russians tried to wipe out distinct cultures in Central Asia. Then, during the Second World War, they deported more than two hundred thousand Tatars from Crimea and renamed all towns, rivers, and districts in Russian. To complete the erasure of Tatar culture, they destroyed Tatar manuscripts and even ripped out of the ground gravestones inscribed in Ottoman script.[4]

Both the peoples of the South who would preserve their culture, their identity, and their independence and those of the North who sought to dominate them realized the centrality of language. To understand that struggle, therefore, the first step is linguistic. The second step is to understand the broader reach of culture.

The people who composed the classical poetry that embodied the Arabic language were nomads, a lifestyle made necessary by the region's lack of dependable water supplies. Their adaptation to their harsh environment is celebrated in their poetry, which for them was often a saga of heroism. For the region's townspeople, however, bedouin heroism translated into dry-land piracy. The bedouin raided or levied protection money on towns and extracted tolls on interurban traffic, but the settled population needed the bedouin to carry their produce across the deserts and to supply them with animal products. The balance of their needs and fears was always delicate and would be drastically changed by the arrival of Islam. So now I turn to the rise of Islam and its complex relationship to nomadism.

CHAPTER 2

Muhammad the Messenger and His Message

Muhammad was born in the late sixth century CE, probably about 570 or 571, in the small mercantile city-state of Mecca.[1] Its lifestyle emphasized security, commerce, and wealth, whereas its bedouin neighbors lived by a code that emphasized hardihood, bravery, and honor. The city folk feared the bedouin, who in turn despised them. They spoke different dialects of Arabic: the bedouin composed their poetry in Najdi Arabic, while the Quran would later be written in Hijazi Arabic. And, because Mecca had a relatively abundant source of water, its people were beginning to think of themselves as citizens (of a place) rather than kin (of a tribe).

Foremost among the Meccans was a group known as the Quraish. They called themselves a tribe (*qabilah*), but in practice what they meant by that word was very different from what "tribe" meant among the bedouin. They were developing a new lifestyle influenced by their location at the crossroads of caravan travel to Byzantine Egypt to the northwest; Byzantine Syria to the north; Sasanian Iran, Iraq, and the Persian Gulf ports to the east; and Yemen and the Indian Ocean to the south.

What made this commercial network possible was that the Meccans had developed means of dealing with the bedouin who controlled the pathways across Arabia. Often thought of as a primitive people, cut off from the influences of the outside world, the Meccans were actually skillful diplomats, adepts at bribery, and shrewd keepers of the widely venerated pagan shrine known as the Kabah. This combination made them relatively rich and secure. Mecca was a thriving entrepôt, and the Meccans wanted to keep it that way.

In the early years of the seventh century there arose among them a man whom the Meccans regarded as an annoying but harmless eccentric. He was married to a rich member of the thriving oligarchy and was himself thought to have been a successful merchant. The

Meccan oligarchs apparently thought that he was just composing bits of mystical poetry. For about seventeen years, the Meccans tolerated him. But finally they came to believe that his verses added up to an attack on their wealth and way of life. He was proclaiming that the linchpin of their system, the pagan cult focused on the Kabah, was false, that the idols it contained were not gods but just pieces of stone, and that the Meccans' worldly deportment was ungodly. Proclaiming himself a messenger from the (single) God, Allah, Muhammad came to be regarded by most of his fellow citizens as a subversive. They feared that if the bedouin were swayed by Muhammad's dismissal of the Meccan religion, the delicate balance on which their prosperity rested might be overturned. Then the bedouin would hold the city hostage.

Muhammad declared their concern irrelevant: God had ordered him to proclaim His message in Arabic so that the Arabs could understand it and follow the True Path, the Sunnah of the One God, Allah, not the false *sunnahs* of the polytheists. When he tried to preach that message, the Meccans drove him out of town.

Muhammad's flight from Mecca in 622, known in Arabic as the *Hijra,* is one of the most important dates in history. It began the Islamic era and has led to the growth of a community of believers that today includes nearly one in every four people. But when he made his way secretly and as a fugitive to the neighboring city Madinah (then known as Yathrib), Muhammad was almost alone, had no financial resources, and was invited to act only as an arbitrator among the feuding factions of the townspeople. His only advantages were his belief and the townspeople's recognition that they were on the brink of a ruinous civil war. They needed the services of a peacemaker (*hakim*), a traditional role in Arabian society. Muhammad saw his task and his opportunity far differently. As God's representative on Earth, he saw himself as a ruler (*hakîm,* pronounced "hakeem"), relaying ordinances from God that had to be obeyed. Despite the difference in the words, he saw the two roles as essentially the same: he wanted to stop the inhabitants' hostility to one another permanently by putting in place and enforcing a new, God-given social order. One of his early moves was to proclaim a treaty to apportion benefits and responsibilities among its citizens. Devising, or, as Muslims would put it, transmitting, the new social order turned out to be central to his activities for the rest of his life. The Islam he proclaimed is above all a system of law. It combined elements from the Arabian tradition with beliefs and customs shared with Judaism and Christianity to form a coherent and all-embracing code of life.

Muhammad thought of himself as a messenger (*rasul*) whose duty it was to proclaim and make understandable the messages God had already sent by other prophets, known to us from the Old Testament,

the New Testament, and Arabian tradition. The Quran repeats many of the traditions relayed in the Old and New Testaments, insists on the oneness of God, and expects a Last Day in which all humankind is to be judged. It contradicts Judaism by proclaiming that Jesus was a true prophet and contradicts Christianity by holding that he was not a son of God "who neither begets nor was begotten." Islam describes Jesus as an apostle sent by God, and he is venerated by Muslims.

Muhammad preached messages that he believed, and his followers believe, were revealed to him by God. Those messages, as collected and transcribed by his followers, make up the Holy Book of Islam, the Quran.

The Quran tells us that Islam is "the religion of Abraham." That is, it professed itself to be a reaffirmation of the already announced religion given by God to Christians, Jews, and other peoples beyond the reach of history. As the Quran proclaims,

> We revealed to you just as We revealed to Nuh [Noah] and the prophets [who came] after him, even as We revealed to Ibrahim [Abraham] and Ismail [Ishmael] and Ishaq [Isaac] and Yaqub [Jacob] and the descendants, and Isa [Jesus] and Aiyub [Job] and Yunus [Jonah] and Harun [Aaron] and Sulaiman [Solomon], and as we offered the Psalms to Daud [David].[2]

But God's message, which one prophet after another had passed to His people, was not followed.[3] The sinful cities killed or drove away the prophets as the Meccans had driven away Muhammad. So, one after another, as in Sodom and Gomorrah, God destroyed them. He did not, however, destroy either the Jews or the Christians, even though, as the Quran proclaims, they also had perverted His message. Instead, God sent Muhammad as His messenger to correct the changes that Christians and Jews had made to His orders. This, as we shall see, is the message of the Islamic fundamentalists today.

With its emphasis on continuity, Islam set in motion two trends. First, many existing customs and beliefs were continued. The ancient pagan shrine in Mecca, the Kabah, and particularly the Black Stone embedded in it, are perhaps the most obvious. Exactly what the Black Stone meant before the establishment of Islam (or even after) is unknown. God was not expected to explain His commands. But believers have apparently always regarded it as somehow a passageway to the Divinity or a means to expiate sin—the stone was said to have originally been white but to have turned black from being rubbed by the hands of sinning supplicants. Like comparable objects in Christianity, it has been almost worn away by the hands of worshippers. All religions are marked by similar holy objects or places. Perhaps the intense devotion to them explains true believers' ferocity toward the symbols of other religions, such as the destruction

by Christians of the statues of ancient Egyptian gods and by Muslims of the statue of the Buddha in Bamian, Afghanistan, and the Temple of Baal at Palmyra in Syria.

Being guardians of the Kabah gave the Meccans a sacrosanct position in Arabian affairs. It is the focus of prayer in Islam, as it was central to the pagan Arabian religion, and it made Mecca more or less the equivalent of Rome in Catholicism. But in the first few years of Muhammad's prophecy, Jerusalem was the focus of prayer. Then God is said to have granted the turn toward Mecca as a particular favor to Muhammad.[4]

While Muhammad's role is central to Islam, he is not regarded as having any divine attributes. He is described in the Quran as a messenger (rasul) sent by God to deliver the one, true, and complete religious message in Arabic so that the Arabs could precisely understand God's intent. His task was limited. He could not perform miracles, and when he died there was no question of a resurrection. He was not to be treated as a prophet—the Quran proclaims Jesus, not Muhammad, to be a true prophet (*nabi*) but not the son of God. Muslims are monotheists (*muwahhids*). The uniqueness of God is the fundamental concept of Islam: so alone and so distant is God that the idea that there can be intermediaries, prophets, saints, or holy men who can intercede with God is regarded by the orthodox as both spurious and sinful. Orthodox Islam regards each person as individually responsible to God for his or her actions. It follows that the actions of each person must conform exactly to God's law. Perhaps more than any other religion, Islam focuses on a legal code of proper conduct.

The Quran tells us that God is concerned with every aspect of humanity's life on Earth. What we do here and now determines our ultimate fate. This makes Islam a very social religion; it does not draw the distinction we often draw between religious and secular affairs. Every aspect of life is considered religious, and religion is politics. In his lifetime, Muhammad was both a messenger of the One God and the ruler of a state. As ruler, his task could be accomplished only by exactly enforcing God's will.

But what of those who fell short of the commands of God and were not expiated by holy men? They were to be punished. All religions, it seems, are fascinated by punishment. Like Judaism and Christianity, Islam particularly focused on sexual transgressions, because it is there that the functioning of society appears most vulnerable. The action that most directly threatens the family and the kinship structure of the state is adultery.

All three religions explicitly set out the punishment for adultery. As we learn from the Old Testament, and as applied by the Puritans in

New England, this punishment has nearly always and everywhere been draconian. The most horrible form is stoning the people to death. Islam was originally less brutal than Judaism or Christianity, but whereas those religions have tempered their punishments over time, Islam has become more inhumane. These opposing trends are evident in many other aspects of the religions as well, although Muslim reformers believe Islam will eventually follow Judaism and Christianity in moving toward leniency.

Can there be leniency? Reformers say yes, while fundamentalists say no. Consider this issue of stoning: there is no justification for this form of execution in the Quran, and, indeed, the Quran specifies that adulterers can marry, so obviously they were not to be killed.[5] Yet the Islamic State (ISIS) and the Taliban have justified the practice by a saying attributed to Muhammad. It may have been a pre-Islamic practice, and this, combined with the fact that theologians accepted it and rulers practiced it, has given it currency in Islam.

In Judaism and Christianity, in which the holy books are fixed, there could be no question of whether such horrible punishments were to be effected: stoning to death is clearly specified in the Old Testament as the punishment for adulterers, blasphemers, and women who lose their virginity before marriage.[6] And the Old Testament makes clear that these are God's orders and must be carried out.[7] Secular governments now prevent Christian and Jewish fundamentalists from doing so, but some Muslim fundamentalist societies still enforce what seems to most Christians and Jews today a medieval and despicable custom.

Multiple marriage is another Arabian custom that was apparently widespread, but the Quran actually limited it. In Sura 4/2, the only verse dealing with this issue, the Quran authorizes multiple marriage in the context of the death of the mother of a man's children. The numbers given are "two at a time, or three or four." The verse continues, "and if you fear that you cannot be just [to them] then [only] one." The verse also allows the man to cohabit with slave girls.[8]

Much is made in the press today about Muslims growing great bushy beards. To many of us, this is the most evident symbol of Islam. In the immediate aftermath of the attack on the World Trade Center in New York in 2001, having a beard got an unfortunate Indian Sikh (that is, a Hindu) attacked and lynched by an American mob that took his beard as proof that he was a Muslim and therefore guilty of the bombing. Today, men with "suspicious" beards often complain of being stopped and questioned by the police. But as I glance over photographs of my family from around the time of the Civil War, I am astonished to see how many of my ancestors must have been

"Muslims." Beards are not generally favored among Americans today, but the Old Testament (Leviticus 19:27 and 21:5) orders believers, "Ye shall not mar [trim] the corners of thy beard." That poor Sikh and my pious ancestors were more "biblical" than most of us today.

Muhammad spent the final years of his life consolidating his community. The communal action emphasized in Muslim religious practice is not different from the gatherings in Christianity and Judaism, but it is more frequent and more massive. The major occasion is the pilgrimage, the hajj, when a million or more people from all over the Muslim world gather to pray together. But each day —as mandated in Islam, five times daily—Muslims gather locally to pray. The procedure is like a military drill. Everyone is expected to do exactly as everyone else and at the same time. Prayer is virtually choreographed. The inference is that this "drill" was used to instill a sense of unity. It is perhaps not too much to say that it was Muhammad's most visible "nation-building" practice.

The main nation-building activity was Muhammad's delivery of what he and his followers believed was God's message. Islam "fit" the tribal societies that his followers would encounter from the Atlantic to the frontier of China, and the Muslim community was itself cast as a sort of tribe. The mores of the effective units of tribes, the clans (*qawms*), were Islam's organizational principles (*usul*). Members of the religious community were to consider one another brothers (*ikhwan*) and to behave as such. Tribal peoples found it familiar.

They also found Islam easy to join. A convert need only affirm belief that there is only one God, deny any sharing (*shirk*) of his majesty with other gods, and affirm that Muhammad was his messenger to be accepted as a member of the community. A believer should say, "There is no god but The God and Muhammad is the Messenger of The God" (*La ilaha illa Allah wa Muhammad Rasul Allah*). Beyond this fundamental credo, Islam was open to great diversity. Outside the cities of the great caliphates, the mainly rural subjects and the inhabitants of the lesser states—the Afghans, Malays, Filipinos, and others—retained the pattern of their traditional lives but with mixtures and emendations brought about by Islam. Often the formal, textual elements of Islam sat lightly on the converts' shoulders: Bedouin tribesmen continued to deal with one another according to their pre-Islamic customs. Afghan Pashtuns similarly followed their own pre-Islamic code, the Pashtunwali, and their legal system, the Ravaj, so that, for example, their women did not inherit property even from their husbands, as they should according to Islamic law, and vengeance (Pashto: *badal*) was mandatory even against fellow Muslims, although it is specifically forbidden in the Quran (4/92–93). Marriage terms, dietary rules, and patterns of dress varied widely.

Mongol converts to Islam continued to be guided by the Mongol law code, the Yassa. In India and Sumatra, converts brought Hindu practices into Islam, while in Africa animistic customs continued to be practiced under Islam.

Other customs were a product of changing circumstances. A prime and today much-discussed example is the veiling of women. Veiling was probably not practiced in the time of Muhammad and is nowhere specifically ordered in the Quran. The operative verse (24/31) orders believing women to cover their breasts and not to flaunt their "bodily ornaments" (*zinat*). The veiling of faces was common in Christian Byzantium at the time of the Arab invasion and was likely adopted from the Christians by freeborn, upper-class Arab women. In Christian Portugal it was common in the sixteenth century. In medieval India, veiling women and secluding them (purdah) was an upper-class affectation probably borrowed by Muslims from the Hindu Rajputs.[9] Thus, ironically, this strictest of Muslim fundamentalist habits is probably an innovation (*bida*) and so is doctrinally "illegal." It was not practiced in a number of Muslim societies, including the Kazakhs, Tajiks, and Kirghiz of Central Asia; the Malays and Javanese of Southeast Asia; the Kurds, Iranians, and most Arabs of the Middle East; and the Arabs and Berbers of North Africa.

As spelled out in the Quran and acted out by Muhammad in Madinah, Islam is a worldly religion. It provides a detailed system of law, social organization, and deportment. It is authoritative and has few ambiguities. The rules are easy to understand: people are not to exploit one another, so usury (*riba*) is forbidden; Muslims are enjoined to help one another, so everyone must pay a welfare tax (*zakat*); all must abide by the law (*Shariah*) where explicitly laid out in the Quran or exemplified by the actions and sayings (*Hadith*) of the Prophet; Muslims are forbidden to kill one another because they are brothers; they should perform the pilgrimage, in which Muslims from all over the world assemble to express their faith, exemplify their unity, and draw strength from one another; and Muslims are commanded to struggle (perform jihad) in the cause of God (*fi sabili'llah*) to create the community (*ummah*) he ordered. These rules constitute the Islamic way—or at least the theoretical Islamic way. Over the centuries and over the vast extent of the Muslim world, these rules were often violated or not enforced. That failure, as I will show, is one of the major issues brought forward by the fundamentalists, who today seek to "return" to the original Islamic order.

In his lifetime, in addition to laying out the legal structure of his community, Muhammad had another urgent task to perform: he had to protect his new community from the Meccans and their bedouin allies, who were threatening to destroy it. If he did not succeed, his

little community would be crushed or starved. As a successful merchant in Mecca, he must have learned firsthand the way Arabian society worked.

Arabian society is usually designated as "tribal," but tribes were less social units than abstract concepts. A person might proudly say that he belonged to such and such a tribe. The bedouin with whom I traveled in the Arabian desert in 1970 would say they were members of the Banu Duwasir, but the Banu Duwasir, who numbered in the thousands, could seldom if ever have come together; few places had enough water to sustain such a large gathering. A tribe was only an abstract "nation." In the practical affairs of daily life, it had no way to control its subdivisions or be controlled by any institution or person. Rather, it was composed of smaller groups of kindred we call clans.

The clan was almost certainly the earliest form of society. It existed among "social" animals and typified all the human groups we know about. For hundreds of thousands of years, all of our ancestors were clansmen or clanswomen. They lived in groups, usually numbering fewer than a hundred people, who camped together, moved together, and shared their produce from hunting, gathering, or herding. They usually had a general idea of their territory and were intent on preserving it and maintaining access to a source of water such as a well or a spring. They were descendants of a single patriarch and his wife or wives so they were brothers, half brothers, or at least cousins. These basic ties were further augmented as the male members of the clan usually married some nearby, and usually related, woman. Sometimes, they were joined by migrants from other clans. Initially, such an immigrant did not become a fellow clan member but was regarded as a "protected stranger" (*jar*). As we shall see, this relationship became crucial as Muslim society evolved.

When human beings began to settle down, clan organization altered. It did not happen rapidly or completely. As towns and cities began to form, the inhabitants carried the clan structure with them. Each city or town, like Mecca and Madinah, was divided into neighborhoods that were usually defined by kinship. Close relatives lived side by side and were often divided from more distant relatives by walls. While there was a sense of geography (the town and its neighborhoods), kinship remained crucial to daily life.

The most important change being brought about at the time of Muhammad was in the way disputes were handled. The mechanism employed to resolve disputes in nomadic life did not work in settled life. That was the reason Muhammad was invited to Madinah: its groups were jostling against one another over the water, land, and benefits of the shared territory. Among nomads, when hostility reached a point of no compromise, the clan would break up and the

weaker group would depart or be driven away. This forced migration was probably why our ancestors settled the whole earth. But, for settled people, such a breakup was ruinously expensive. To abandon the source of water and farmland, particularly in the desert or steppe, was tantamount to suicide. So the people of Madinah sought a peacemaker to settle their dispute before they destroyed one another and their settlement. Madinah was in the confusing period of transition when the tensions of society remained but the accepted way to resolve them no longer worked. It was that confusion that opened the way for Muhammad to construct the first Islamic society.

Meanwhile, the clan remained the basic unit of nomadic bedouin society. And it was this social reality that gave Muhammad the means to extend and perpetuate Islamic society. Understanding it is crucial to Islamic history.

The most common Arabic word for "clan" was *qawm.* A qawm was theoretically a part of a tribe—as my bedouin companions would say, they were "of" the Banu Duwasir—but their clans were autonomous. Each governed itself, kept its own herds, knew its own territory, and, except for contracting marriages and taking part in occasional festivals, rarely met peacefully with others. It did not submit to any overarching "law" or authority. Necessarily it was also a paramilitary unit. It had to defend its herd, its water source, and the patch of ground on which, when rainwater became available, it grew its vegetables. Otherwise it would starve. Such security as its members achieved depended on revenge (*thar*)—anyone who hurt one of "us" would know that "we" would retaliate against him or one of his immediate kinsmen. To work, the system depended on the same strategy the United States evolved in the Cold War, mutual assured destruction. "Assured" was the key word. Every cultural attitude was directed to ensure certainty of retaliation. Not to retaliate was not only shameful (*aib*) but also disgraceful (*khuzi*). It is perhaps not too much to say that it was "unpatriotic." Cowardice, laziness, or failure to act by a member endangered the whole clan. Thus, each clan was driven both by a fear of shame and by intense loyalty. That sense of loyalty was in effect a sort of "nationalism," and indeed the word for clan loyalty, *qawmiyah,* has become the modern term for ethnic nationalism. I will often refer to it in Part 3 of this book.

Warfare among clans was endemic. This was true not only of the Arabs but also of comparable societies. Allow me to draw a loose analogy to a better-documented case to bring out two essential points: the way societies resolved domestic conflict and how they protected themselves from foreigners. As among the Arabian bedouin, in the ancient Greek city-states (poleis), the relationship of resources to population was always strained. When population outran resources,

social or political tensions threatened to destroy the community. They had to be resolved. Resolution was effected usually by the expulsion of the weaker party. That is why Greek colonies were created all over the Mediterranean, and this must also have been the case in Arabia. That is the first point.

The second point of comparison is the relationship of bedouin clans or Greek city-states to one another. There was no way that the groups that regarded one another as actual or potential enemies could unite. Thus, while both the Greeks and the bedouin were warring peoples and devoted much of their lives to combat, their aggregate military potential was dissipated or canceled by mutual hostilities. The Greek cities never managed to unite to stop the Romans from conquering them, and for centuries it was easy for both the Byzantine and Sasanian Iranian empires to contain or conquer Arabian clans. Then, suddenly, in the middle of the seventh century, the Arabian bedouin were able to defeat both superpowers. They did so because of Muhammad's revolutionary military policy.

Such revolutions are known among other nomadic peoples. They were rare because clans normally had no means to merge. All their traditions and indeed the imperatives of survival worked against amalgamation and for hostility. Rarely were these internal hostilities overcome, but when they were, the results were spectacular. Such unity accounts for the rapid growth of Genghis Khan's Mongol Empire, the creation of the medieval al-Muwahid Berber empire in what is now Morocco, and the nineteenth-century Comanche empire in the American southwest. In Arabia Muhammad brought forward a means to unite the bedouin clans.

The strategy Muhammad devised was compatible both with tribalism and with the new religion he was proclaiming. It had two parts. The first was to treat his small band of followers, the nucleus of his community (the ummah), as a sort of qawm, but as a clan based on religion rather than on kinship. All of the attributes of the qawm were carried over into the ummah. Within the religious qawm, the members were to consider themselves brothers (ikhwan). Members were to defend one another; share their wealth; live according to the same "way," or social code; and never kill one another. Whereas before, irreconcilable hostility or disagreement could be handled only by parting, Muhammad reversed this trend. Clans could be drawn in and made to relate peacefully to one another as fellow members of the ummah of Islam. The ideal of brotherhood, not always realized, of course, became the social glue of Islam. The attraction of brotherhood and the religion's openness to conversion account for the explosive growth of the Muslim community over the centuries; hundreds of millions of pagans, Jews, Christians, and Hindus converted.

The second part of Muhammad's strategy was to make the Muslim qawm easy to join and open to all. As it grew in numbers and strength, it advanced across Arabia like an avalanche: as clan A converted or was forced to join, it increased the weight and power of the Islamic group. Clan B, caught between the advancing Muslims and its traditional rivals, had little choice. It did not know how to ally itself with the clans that were its traditional enemies to fight the Muslims, but the Muslims offered it membership: it could join or be crushed. Islam swept across Arabia as group after group submitted. In fact, the basic meaning of "Muslim" is "one who submits."[10]

In the Arabia of the seventh century, what had been a collection of warring societies became a unified army that quickly overwhelmed the great powers of its time. The analogy should not be pushed too far, but we can see elements of this strategy today in the relationship of the Muslim fundamentalist insurgents, particularly the Islamic State, to the communities they encounter.

CHAPTER 3

The Caliphate and the Conquests

Muslims hold that God's order was implemented successfully under Muhammad. For believers, his decade in command of the original community was a golden age in which the will of God was truly manifested. His death in 632 could have been fatal not only to the fledgling community but also to the earthly manifestation of God's will. In fact his death was such a shock that, legend has it, some of his followers refused to believe it.

The nomadic tribesmen had no such doubt. They had submitted (*salamat*) and so became Muslims, but they did not become believers (*muimins*). They apparently regarded their relationship to the Islamic community as only a personal commitment or pledge to Muhammad, and, in the colorful Arabic phrase, they "turned back on their heels" (*irtaddu ala aqibihim*) when he died. Muhammad's empire threatened to disappear like a mirage in the desert heat.

Muhammad's closest associates knew they had to act quickly. Meeting in what must have been desperation, they decided to make one of their number the "follower"—the basic meaning of the word "caliph" (*khalifah*)—or "ruler of the believers" (*amir al-muiminin*). The man they chose was the sometime leader of the community prayers, the man who "stands in front" (*imam*). As imam, Muhammad's father-in-law, Abu Bakr, had no claim to an intimate or interpretative relationship to God. He functioned only as an organizer of the community.[1] He became what businessmen today would call the chief operating officer. He was to carry out the orders and plans that Muhammad had transmitted, as they believed, from God. His role was not to create or amend but only to effect what already had been proclaimed.

Abu Bakr's first task was to recapture the tribesmen who had defected. To do so, he loosed on Arabia a war of unprecedented ferocity, but, wisely, he also drew on a precedent Muhammad had already set. He directed the energies and lusts of the tribesmen into

what the bedouin most liked, traditional raids (*ghazawat*), northward across the Great Nafud desert against the Syrian province of the Byzantine Empire and the Tigris-Euphrates province of the Sasanian Iranian empire. The unintended or at least unplanned consequence of this policy of diverting the tribes was that it set off the great campaigns of conquest that were to take Muslim warriors to the frontier of China and the middle of France. What started as a tribal raid remained the basis of the Islamic state's foreign policy for the next two centuries and created its vast Afro-Asian-European empire. War, as the great historian Ibn Khaldun later wrote of early Muslims, "turned their faces in one direction" and at least temporarily ended their divisions.

Abu Bakr "stood in front" of the tiny Muslim state for only two years, but in those years he created revolutionary change on a vast scale. To organize and rule the new empire, to handle the spoils of conquest, to keep the tribal armies intact so that the empire did not fly apart, and to perpetuate God's will as Muhammad had proclaimed it were huge and growing tasks. Abu Bakr had only begun to accomplish them when he also died. But the concept of succession (*khalifiyah*) was established, and the designation of another member of Muhammad's inner group, Umar, as the second caliph was effected smoothly.

Umar, having already served as a sort of deputy caliph under Abu Bakr, established firm control over the growing and scattered community while projecting an image of conciliation. As he said on taking office in 634—and as today's leader of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, has quoted him—"I will seek guidance from the Holy Book, and will follow the examples set by the Holy Prophet and Abu Bakr. In this task I seek your assistance. If I follow the right path, follow me. If I deviate from the right path, correct me so that we are not led astray."

Neither in Umar's time nor today would it have been wise to accept the invitation.

Viewed from the outside, Umar's Islamic state was an unprecedented military achievement, but it came at a time when a climate shift—the beginning of the Medieval Warm Period—was turning the home provinces of the Arabian Peninsula into a vast dust bowl. The oases' wells ran dry. Arabia starved amid its martial glory, and worse was to follow. As often happened in medieval Europe, plague followed famine. In the cities of the former Byzantine province of Syria, the inhabitants and the newly arrived Arabian tribal army died by the thousands. Just four years into Umar's reign, the Islamic state came close to collapse. That it did not collapse is regarded by Muslims as proof of God's approval.[2]

The forward march of the Islamic state eastward across Iran to Afghanistan and westward along the Mediterranean to the Atlantic created both great challenges and great opportunities. For the true believers, holding the community together by preserving the message Muhammad had delivered was an all-consuming challenge, and they were an endangered species. In the decade after Muhammad's death, many of the little band died of sickness or were killed in the wars of conquest. As true believers, they were the original suicide attackers, whose self-sacrifice today's fedayeen (*fidayin*) seek to emulate. So many died, in fact, that those who survived insisted that the message Muhammad had delivered be collected before it was lost. Remembering all God's messages and Muhammad's sayings and actions—the community's charter and its book of instructions—was a massive undertaking, and so critical was it to the preservation of the community that many of Muhammad's close companions chose to devote themselves entirely to remembering and recording it.

These tasks were not easy to perform. Most members of the community were illiterate and had never faced a challenge like remembering their collective existence—few of us have! And they quickly discovered the immensity of the task. As devotees of the classical poetry, they probably had good memories. We know from studies of other illiterate societies that reciters of myths, legends, and stories kept great bodies of verse intact even over centuries. This is how we have received the tales of Homer, the *Rig Veda,* and the *Avesta.* But we are probably right to suspect that at least the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were added to, amended, and partially lost as each reciter transmitted them. In Arabic poetry, the tight and exacting interplay of meter and verse probably kept the reciters (*rawis*) close to what the poets had sung, but still, what we read today must be a composite of what poets sang and what later rawis added and subtracted.

But ordinary citizens are not professional reciters of lore. And even if they were good at remembering poetry, only a few of the verses Muhammad had proclaimed were governed by meter or in rhyme schemes. Yet the need for exact reproduction was greater than in the tribal poetry. Muhammad proclaimed, and his followers believed, that each verse was a message from God. It could not be modified. The men who recited the verses Muhammad had spoken, the "keepers" (*huffaz*), had to be exact. After all, what they preserved separated the legal from the illegal. The exact wording might make the difference between favor and punishment or even between life and death. Ambiguity was unacceptable. But ambiguity is inherent in memory. What one person remembers may differ from what another is sure he heard or saw. No matter how hard the reciters tried, they were bound to have lapses. And little of it was written down.

According to tradition, there were only some notes that had been jotted down on “scraps of leather, wood and bone,” but the Arabic script then in use was rudimentary.[3] The script resembled the notation system used by composers of medieval music: a sort of shorthand to remind the reader of what he already knew. The Arabic script did not reproduce vowels—so the phrase I just wrote would come out as “Th rbc scrpt dd nt rprdc vwls.” And since Arabic distinguishes several letters only by the placement of dots, the script then available would have been unable to distinguish among *b, t, th,* and *n,* as well as some letters not used in English. A script that filled these gaps was not developed until about two hundred years later. So whatever was written on scraps of leather, wood, and bone was more an aide-mémoire than a text.

Lapses of memory and the inadequacy of script encouraged variant readings. At first, collectors tried to preserve all the variants because they feared losing the exact wording of God’s commands. That produced such confusion that it was judged dangerous to public order. So it was that, during the time of Caliph Uthman, the believers reached agreement on a single text, which was then reproduced in copies, identical except that they were written in the scripts of the new empire’s various provinces. Each major center received a copy and thus had a legally binding code.

Uthman no doubt thought he had solved the ambiguities and conflicts that had already begun to surface. The canonical text, however, did not complete the process: despite the purge, several variant readings were preserved and were later subjected to exhaustive study by theologians and jurisconsults.[4] In the commentaries (*tafasir*), one often finds the notation, “but [so and so] reads it [thus] . . .” Finally, compromises were reached so that several readings were regarded as “orthodox.” The standard or orthodox text comprises some six thousand verses. This is the Quran as we know it.

Even the most orthodox realized that among the verses there were inconsistencies and contradictions. Reconciling or prioritizing these inconsistencies has been a major activity of legal scholars over the centuries. But Muslims quickly recognized the need to supplement the Quran. The only way to do this was to recall what Muhammad had done or said. These doings and sayings are known as the “tradition” or the “rapportage” (Hadith).

Hadiths were of course more informal than the verses of the Quran, but since Muhammad was assumed to have been not only personally moral but also guided by God, everyone in Madinah must have watched his actions and listened to his every word. “Remembering” what he said or did was very attractive: it was how an individual could assert a close relationship to God’s messenger: “The Prophet said

to me . . .” It could also act as a sort of trump card in an argument: “I’m just doing what the Prophet did when he . . .” Everyone had an incentive to bring forth memories. The result was the growth of a vast auxiliary to the Quran. Later generations even attributed to Muhammad “Christian texts, sayings from the Apostles and the Apocrypha, Jewish views, doctrines of Greek philosophers, etc. which had found favour in certain Muslim circles. . . . No scruples were felt in making the Prophet . . . proclaim new doctrines and dogmas.”[5] In later centuries codifying and verifying hadiths would become a formative legal enterprise, as we shall see.

While the men closest to Muhammad devoted themselves to collecting the verses of the Quran and to recalling, even if not always accurately or impartially, his saying and deeds, their lead was not followed by the remaining Quraish oligarchs and their sons.

Meccan oligarchs, fathers and sons alike, rushed away from what had become the backwater of the empire to reap unimagined riches in the newly conquered areas. The older men, while skilled, had operated on a relatively small scale; now the conquests gave them access to sources of wealth beyond their dreams, and they were determined to exploit the opportunity. Our sources, which were written by others, give us little detail on their activities, but it appears they created a massive system of economic exploitation bearing some relationship to the later system of imperialism. They devoted their energies to the acquisition of vast tracts of lands in Syria, Iraq, Iran, and Khurasan.

Although we do not know much about the internal politics of the time, it is obvious that the Meccan merchants knew that Caliph Umar’s successor, Uthman, would not hinder them in their pursuit of wealth and power. While he was related by marriage to Muhammad and had been one of his early supporters, he was a compromise candidate whom the stronger members of the inner group hoped to bend to their purposes. As it turned out, he served his closer kinsmen, the Quraish oligarchs, more than he served the small band of true believers. While the true believers tended to stay at home, the merchants and men of action went to the newly won provinces.

As Islam spread out of Arabia, Muslims encountered peoples of different cultures. The caliph and his agents tried to keep the Arabs separate, fearing that their armies would melt into the native populations. To this end, they created cantonments much as later imperialists did. The natives, however, flocked to Basra, Kufa, and Qom, just as in later times, Indians, Arabs, Turks, Balinese, and Sumatrans would pour into the trading posts and forts of European colonists and imperialists.[6]

They could not be kept out. The urge to move into the cantonments

—or into slums surrounding them—was irresistible. There the urban poor and the immigrants found work because the Arab conquerors lacked the skills of settled life and had the means to employ helpers. The helpers, who had never been treated as "citizens" of the Byzantine or the Sasanian empires, had little liberty or wealth to lose. And, as we have learned in our own times, defeated people are attracted to the victors and seek to copy their ways. Still, many found that conforming to Islam did little to improve their status. While attracted by what they discovered of the religion, they came to resent the conquerors' Arab-only interpretation of Islam. They could be accepted into the Islamic community only as *muwali,* or what we would call second-class citizens. This status was an adaptation to the position of the "protected stranger" (*jar*) in bedouin clans. But being a stranger, protected or not, took on a new meaning when society was defined by religion. When the non-Arabs converted to Islam, they found their way blocked. Islam, as their Arab rulers practiced it, was an Arab religion. So, as they began to claim an identity as non-Arab Muslims, they inevitably brought to this new identity much of their non-Islamic tradition.

Most historians date the opening of Islam to non-Arab "clients" to events following the murder of the third caliph, Uthman. I will lay out the traditional view and then suggest a more nuanced explanation.

During his reign as caliph, Uthman had engaged in the abiding sin of rulers, nepotism. One after another, he favored his Quraish relatives —including those who had driven Muhammad out of Mecca— appointing them to powerful and lucrative positions. He could not satisfy them all and was murdered by a disappointed would-be profiteer.

His death opened a new window on the Islamic state. Though enormously powerful abroad, it was virtually powerless at its center. Almost all those who had been able to move did so. Apparently there were no guards or police in Madinah. The small band of armed conspirators who had murdered Uthman were able to hold out in his house for several days before being driven out. Uthman's associate and presumed rival, Ali, the senior surviving member of Muhammad's associates, had done nothing to save him.

Uthman's relatives, particularly the man he had appointed to the powerful governorship of the Levant, Muawiyah, blamed Ali for their kinsman's death and sought revenge. With a tribal army stationed in and around Damascus, Muawiyah was in a strong position, whereas Ali, living in what must have been a much-reduced Madinah, had no access to tribal forces. Worse, some of the true believers blamed Ali for his alleged complicity in the murder. But his credentials to become caliph were considered indisputable: he was the son-in-law of

Muhammad and father of Muhammad's two grandsons, Hassan and Husain. Despite opposition, Ali was proclaimed caliph. But to secure his position, he too had to quit Madinah. Since Muawiyah was in command in Syria, Ali went east to Iraq to raise an army among the Arab tribesmen who had gone there twenty years before. Those tribesmen had been much changed by their new way of life, and Ali had little to offer them. He failed to win adherents or subdue his opponents, and in just two years his turbulent caliphate, like Uthman's, would be terminated by the blow of an assassin.

So ended what later Muslims regard as the epoch of the four "rightly guided" (*Rashidun*) caliphs. Together with the decade of Muhammad's rule in Madinah, it is this forty-year period of canonical Islam to which modern fundamentalists seek to return.

At that point, in 661, the Islamic community was consolidated into the Umayyad caliphate as a virtually secular empire under Uthman's would-be protector, Muawiyah. The caliphate would reach its greatest extent under the Umayyads, stretching from the borders of China to central France, but that very success also precipitated the rebellion that would shatter Islam beyond reunification.

The rebellion began in the East in the 740s. Out of Khurasan and rolling across Iraq and Syria, as in today's Islamic State, came fanatical warriors from many nations marching under black banners. They were recruited and led by a shadowy figure called "Abu Muslim." Almost nothing is known of him, not his origin, his language, or his real name. Yet he was surely one of the most remarkable revolutionaries of all time. With no obvious resources of kindred, wealth, or patronage, he set out to overthrow the greatest state of his time, the Umayyad caliphate. Inspired by a belief that the world was nearing its last day, at which point a "rightly guided" savior (a *Mahdi*), would return to Earth to judge humanity, his rag-tag army swept all before it. Who these people were, where they came from, and what they wanted was as baffling to the Umayyads as the Islamic State is to governments today. But they set in motion one of the most important developments in Islamic affairs.

As I mentioned, I have a somewhat unorthodox interpretation of the forces Abu Muslim galvanized. Let me explain.

One consequence of the bedouin armies' outward thrust during the early caliphate was that they stirred up the population of the Sasanian empire. At least the more affluent members of that population, who had inherited a sophisticated cultural tradition, must have regarded the incoming bedouin as barbarians. Probably they reacted much as the settled populations of Roman Europe did to invasions by the Vandals and other Germanic tribes. The incoming tribesmen were crude, but they were armed, so the local populations accommodated

to them. They adopted many of the ways of the conquerors, but not all ways. The Iranians who poured into the new garrison towns brought with them elements of their ancient religion, Zoroastrianism. As they mingled with the Arabs, they at least nominally converted to the religion of their conquerors. Probably they did so because, as Muslims, they paid fewer taxes, felt more secure, and found getting employment easier. Many, perhaps most, must also have been inspired by Islam. But the conquerors told them that they were not fully acceptable as fellow, that is, Arab, Muslims. We cannot know, but events suggest that the Iranians found the contrast between shared belief and mere acceptance painful. A few reacted by becoming outstanding scholars of the Arabic language and even wrote highly respected commentaries (tafasir) on the Quran. Others accepted the ruling Arabs' view of them, that they were not true Muslims, not *Arab* Muslims, and they began to recast Islam in a traditional Iranian mold.

How the Iranians did this and what the results were are controversial—and the latter were greatly affected by subsequent events—but my interpretation is, to put it simply, that this was the origin of the other main division of Islam, Shiism. The process and the result have proven so important that they should be briefly sketched. I begin with the father of the traditional Iranian religion, Zoroaster.

Zoroaster is probably the least known of the world's great religious figures. No one knows much about him personally, but the religion he proclaimed, sometime around 1000 BCE, deeply influenced both Judaism and Christianity. He preached that there was a single god who created heaven and earth, good and evil, truth and falsehood, and that the life we participate in will end on "the Last Day" (*frahegird*) when a messiah (*soshyant*) will appear to raise the dead, judge humankind, and give the worthy people eternal life (*anosh*). Zoroaster anticipated a figure like the Sufi dervish (whom he called a *dregush*), a "master of knowledge" like an ayatollah (*magupat*), learned men (magi like the *ulamah*), and teachers like the *mollas* (foreshadowed in Zoroastrianism as *mobads*); and he proclaimed that God laid out a law code to regulate society just as Islam did in the Shariah. As practiced by the Iranians, Zoroastrianism was intensely emotional. Its worshippers took part in a passion play (a *taziyeh*) in which they acted out the drama of human failure and expiated their sins. This would later be recast in Shiism with a focus on the sons of the man credited with inspiring Shiism, Caliph Ali.

In short, it seems to me that the pattern of Shiism was inherited from Zoroastrianism. "Translating" this pattern into Islam took hundreds of years, but the process was apparently well under way in 748 or 749, some 116 or 117 years after the death of Muhammad, when Abu Muslim began his march to overthrow the Umayyad

caliphate.

Like the army of today's Islamic State, the insurgents drew their strength less from weapons or organization than from the fervor of their belief and eschatological propaganda. Abu Muslim convinced the presumably already disaffected population of what is today Syria and Iraq that it was being tyrannized and exploited by a godless regime, and that revolt was not only legal but mandatory. He had no means of mass communication, but there are hints that he sent traditional spreaders of tales (*maddads*) ahead of his insurgents. In his campaign, Abu Muslim showed himself to be a superb tactician. Like some later revolutionaries, he chose to fight only in small engagements that he knew he could win. By winning against the presumably mighty Umayyad regime, he was able to convince the population he had divine approval, a tactic used by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State today. Each success led to the next; adherents from all over the Muslim world flocked to his black banner. In a little more than a year, his improvised and poorly equipped army had caused the Umayyad caliphate to disintegrate.

Then, trends were set in motion that would have profound effects down to our time. But at that moment, the revolutionary movement appears to have fallen apart. It was "hijacked" by another branch of Muhammad's family. Its leaders immediately executed Abu Muslim and dropped his revolutionary message. Temporarily, the followers of Abu Muslim appeared to be utterly defeated. They were not, however, exterminated, nor was their religious message destroyed. Ideas are harder to kill than humans. But all eyes turned toward the "victors." They declared themselves to be Orthodox Sunnis, and proclaimed a new caliphate in the name of one of their Quraish ancestors, Abbas. To set themselves off from the Umayyad, who were based in Damascus, they established themselves in what is today Iraq. But they found in their new surroundings enough of the residue of Iran that the state they established was in many ways the Sasanian empire reborn. It was to be the grandest of the caliphates.

CHAPTER 4

The Great Days of the Caliphates and the Evolution of Islam

To solidify their rule, the newly empowered Abbasids hunted down and killed most of their Umayyad cousins. Their aim was to reunify the Muslim world after the trauma of the revolution, but they failed. Unity would never return. It probably would never have been possible to reconstitute a single caliphate, but disunity was made certain by the flight of one of the Umayyad princes. He made his way to Spain, where he was adopted by the already established Arab-Berber kingdom founded on the wreck of a kingdom of one of the Germanic tribes that had destroyed the western Roman Empire. It was known as al-Andalus, a name adapted from the name of its founders, the Vandals.[1]

So tyrannical was the rule of the Vandals that Arab and Berber Muslim invaders had been encouraged by the unhappy inhabitants, and particularly by the persecuted Jewish community, to cross the Mediterranean from already Muslim Morocco at Jabal al-Tariq (from which comes the name Gibraltar). After that crossing in 711, Muslims would stay in parts of the Iberian Peninsula for nearly seven hundred years and evolve a remarkable blend of Muslim and Jewish cultures.[2] In the universities of al-Andalus, a galaxy of philosophers, scientists, physicians, poets, and musicians were given the freedom to follow their opinions, proclaim their discoveries, and practice their arts.

Muslim Spain (al-Andalus) as it was about a thousand years ago. Over the centuries, town by town, district by district, the warlike Christian states of Leon, Castile, Navarre, Aragon, and Barcelona pushed south until, in 1492, they drove away tens of thousands of Muslims and Jews, subjected those who remained to the Inquisition, and put an end to one of the most advanced societies in Europe.

The contrast to the rest of Europe was stunning. Few in Europe could read, and those few were holed up in monasteries. The secular inhabitants who could read probably did it at the level of today's primary school pupils. Few of the "signers" of the Magna Carta, for instance, could have written more than their names, if that, and probably none of them could have read the document itself. It is hard to find evidence of more than a few men or women of culture or even of a degree of social refinement. In al-Andalus, in contrast, the arts flourished, new forms of poetry were invented, and musical tastes inspired what became the troubadour movement. In art, architecture, music, and poetry, as well as in medicine and science, the ecumenical society of al-Andalus not only made great contributions itself but also served as a link between the Greco-Roman classical world and the societies, particularly in Italy, that had begun to lay the basis of the Renaissance.

Meanwhile, the Abbasids had founded their flourishing state, their caliphate, in the valley of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers and built a

series of great palace cities—the most famous, Baghdad, was founded twelve years after Abu Muslim's revolution in 762—from which to rule an empire that extended from the Mediterranean to the Indus River and from the tip of Arabia to the Chinese border. Known to Europeans and Americans mainly through the fanciful tales of *The Arabian Nights* but to the peoples of the global South as the brilliant flowering of their civilization, the societies of medieval Islamic caliphates were, Muslims thought, the world as contemporary civilized people wanted it to be.

Between the two caliphates on opposite ends of the Mediterranean, al-Andalus in the West and al-Abbasid in the East, a third caliphate, that of the Fatimids, established itself in Egypt in the tenth century. Like the other two (and also like the Islamic State today), it based its claim to legitimacy on its relationship to Muhammad, deriving its title from Muhammad's daughter Fatima. What distinguished the Fatimid Empire most clearly from the other two was that it was the first Shiah Muslim caliphate and that it owed much to its early support by the Berbers of Africa rather than the Arabs of Asia. Shiism had spread alongside Sunnism far and wide, and the Berber stood head to head or often sword to sword with the Arab.

Along with Ta'ng China, these three states were the greatest centers of civilization during the long Dark Ages of Europe, and their apogee marks the high point of Islamic civilization. It is an idealized memory of this period that galvanizes the pride and hope of modern Muslims. When European settlements were little more than rustic villages, Baghdad, Cairo, Cordoba, and Seville were beacons of light in a dark world. Over the following centuries, this light would spread to Shanghai, Delhi, Bukhara, Samarqand, Nishapur, Herat, Isfahan, Shiraz, Konya, Istanbul, Palermo, Fez, and Timbuktu. When few Europeans could read, these cities had libraries, schools, and literary societies. Baghdad even had a flourishing book publishing industry that used (and manufactured) for the first time outside China that great invention, paper.

Everywhere they went, Muslims established what they called "the realm of peace" (*Dar al-Salam*) with a degree of respect for cultural and even religious diversity unimagined in Christian Europe. Jews, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, and peoples of other religions and races lived side by side, in a congruence that contrasted with the often violent and always threatening apartheid of Europeans. While Europeans moved relatively freely among Muslims, establishing trading posts that at times amounted to virtual colonies in Muslim lands, Muslim travelers almost never dared venture into Europe outside Muslim Spain. Jews in Europe were consigned to ghettoes and were periodically driven out even from "enlightened" university towns

as they were in 1071 from Cambridge, but they moved in relative freedom in Cairo and Fez. The great medieval travelers, Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta, could both journey safely to China, India, or Egypt, but only Marco Polo was safe in Venice.

Since the time of Muhammad, who made a treaty with the non-Muslim community of Madinah, Islam had evolved a pattern for regulating the lives of non-Muslims. Jews and Christians lived as protected communities (*dhimmis*). Except in military affairs, each community was allowed to live according to its own customs, arrange for its own community services, maintain its own religious institutions, and govern itself. It apportioned taxes internally as it saw fit, provided it collected what the state demanded of it, and its headman, usually a community-chosen religious figure, represented it to the leaders of the Muslim community.[3]

This practice was partly shaped by geography and history. At the advent of Islam, Christian Byzantium and the Zoroastrian Sasanian empire were the established world powers. As the Islamic caliphate expanded, conquering much of the Byzantine Empire and all of the Sasanian Persian empire, it acquired resident Christian, Zoroastrian, and Jewish communities. Whole communities of Hindus were also eventually incorporated into Muslim states. Except in the heat of warfare, the Islamic states customarily left these peoples free to practice their religions, wear their distinctive dress, speak their own languages, enforce their own laws and customs, and govern themselves under their own authorities. The system was far from perfect, but Christians and Jews generally lived securely in communities within Muslim states, whereas Jews were always at risk and often persecuted, occasionally driven away, or even slaughtered in Christian states.[4] Where they were dominant, Christians were safer, but even slight doctrinal differences often resulted in brutal persecutions or massacres of the “heretics.”[5] Indeed, the prototype of the later Crusades was the Catholic Church–inspired French attack on the Cathar Christians who lived in southwestern France. It was also there that the Inquisition got its start.

Over the centuries, many Christians and Jews converted to Islam. That Islam forcibly converted them is a myth; actually, the Islamic states preferred that the conquered peoples remain non-Muslim because that status required them to pay an extra tax in lieu of military service. In practice, Muslim rulers and Muslims in general often fell short of what the religion proclaimed, but historically, Islam has been the most tolerant of the three religions.[6]

Even short of warfare, Christianity has been generally intolerant and violent in its relationship with both Jews and Muslims. Christians forced European Jews into ghettos, made them wear distinctive dress,

and behaved toward them like the Mafia toward shopkeepers. They forced the resident Jews to pay what amounted to protection money. They also humiliated them, raised mobs to attack them, and often drove them away.[7]

Meanwhile, within Islam, diverse sects, orders, and schools proliferated. As with Catholicism and Protestantism, the division in Islam between Sunnism and Shiism would both create great social tensions and promote the spread of religion because peoples with different cultural and ethnic orientations would find one or the other version compatible with their existing political, social, and economic order. As in Protestantism, in Shiism subsidiary or at least related cults would also flourish, so that distinct national groups could find dogmas to express their separate identities. We see this tendency today in the diversity of groups—Druze, Ismailis, Alawis, and others—who have found niches in Islam.

Ethnically, the Muslim community—the single ummah that was the ideal of Islam—was never established. The very success of Islam as a warring society made impossible the achievement of Islam as a homogeneous society. We see this in the division between bedouin and city dwellers, in the Sunni-Shii split, in the division of the three great caliphates, and in the ethnic separation of Arab, Berber, Iranian, Turk, and others.

In the great centers of civilization, life had become easy, and enjoyment of it argued persuasively against religious strictness. Rulers and the wealthier inhabitants were increasingly unwilling to follow the austere practices ascribed to early Islam. The 164 years that had passed since the Hijra had seen the growth of a very different society from the one Muhammad had proclaimed. Fearing a decline in the purity of the faith, some clerics urged the reinforcement of the community's cultural and legal bases (usul). The foremost of these fundamentalists was Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal, who was born in Baghdad about 780.

By the time of Hanbal's birth, Islam was awash with reports and snippets on the sayings and doings of Muhammad the Messenger. They were already recognized as the only way that the Quran could be fully understood, its contradictions sorted out, its priorities established, and its omissions filled in. They had to be gathered. Little attention was paid to whether the substance made sense in the context of Madinah in Muhammad's lifetime or was being used to decide an issue that had not arisen when he was said to have acted on it. The tendency was to collect everything rather than lose anything that might shed light on the Quran. Gathering memories became the lifework of Hanbal. He, and after his death his son, were said to have collected nearly thirty thousand reports (hadiths). But could such

reports be trusted?

Muslim scholars realized that many reports were obviously false. If false reports were allowed to decide legal matters, they thought that God's will would be subverted. The false had to be separated from the true. This was not just a scholarly task; it cut to the heart of the Islamic legal system. Only if a body of solid information could be assembled would it be of use in supplementing the Quran. So they developed a process they called "wounding and authentication" (*al-jarh wa al-tadil*). "Wounding" consisted of challenging the source: Did the person identified as the source have contact with Muhammad or get his information from someone who did? Was he a trustworthy person? Was the "chain" (*silsilah*) of transmission (the people who heard from X and told it to Y, who told it to Z) made up of reliable people who were in some sort of contact with one another? If a hadith was attributed to someone who could not have known the Prophet, or if the chain of transmission was faulty or incomplete, the hadith was put aside. If it checked out, it could be considered valid.

In collecting these reports and evaluating the transmitters, Hanbal was deeply disturbed by the growing diversity of interpretations of Islam and sought to return to the bases set forth by Muhammad.[8] For years, he traveled all over the caliph's realm, interviewing people who claimed that their ancestors had contact with Muhammad. Then he published a sort of encyclopedia (the *Musnad*) that, taken together with the Quran, would, he thought, bind Islam in a tight historical framework. In short, he began the moves we observe today among Islamic fundamentalists.

In his time, Hanbal ran afoul of the Abbasid caliphs Mamun and Mutasim, who favored allowing judges to reason by analogy (*qiyas*) to adapt the Shariah to changing circumstances or community practice. In an attempt to make him comply with this policy, Hanbal was ordered to recant before a sort of inquisitorial court. When he refused, he was chained, imprisoned, and tortured. What is particularly striking is that when he died, in 855, he—and presumably his reactionary doctrine—was so popular that some eight hundred thousand people, including sixty thousand women, are said to have attended his funeral. He left a legacy of enormous influence in Muslim communities throughout the world and is regarded as the philosopher who inspired the Wahhabis, the Muslim Brotherhood, al-Qaida, and the Islamic State.

Despite his influence on the way judges interpreted Islamic law, Hanbal actually wrote little. During his time in prison, he wrote a book on prayer, but it was his lectures that spread his influence. They were read and memorized by generations, who carried them throughout the Muslim world as adherents of Hanbalism, a school

(*madhhab*) of law named after him.

Meanwhile, during the Abbasid caliphate, a new people began to arrive in the Middle East, Turks from Central Asia. They arrived as the resident population was growing effete and no longer wanted to serve as soldiers.[9] Fresh from the steppes and deserts of Central Asia, the Turks were hardy men and, like the bedouin in the time of Muhammad, were born soldiers.

At first, the Turks came individually and in small groups and hired themselves out as guards and soldiers, but, like the praetorians of Rome, they soon turned on their masters. As they scrambled for power and wealth, they virtually destroyed the Abbasid caliphate, reducing its revenue by the year 900 to only about 3 or 4 percent of what it had been a hundred years before and reducing the caliph to a cipher. A then popular ditty summarized the decline of the caliphate:

> A caliph caged between [the Turkish warlords] Wasif and Bugha
> Says only what they say to him just like a parrot.[10]

The Abbasids were not the Turkish warlords' only victims. At the other side of the Asian landmass, a Turkish warlord overthrew the Chinese Ta'ng dynasty in 907. After the half-century interval of the "Five Dynasties," the Song dynasty reestablished central power in 960. One of its first major acts was to close the northern frontier to "barbarian"—that is, mainly Turkish—incursions. Once again, as under the Han dynasty almost a thousand years before, Turkish tribes pushed their way or were thrown westward. Now arriving en masse, they made no pretense of serving the state. Their aim was to take it over. By 1040 the most impressive group, known for its paramount chief as the Seljuqs, had converted to Islam. They conquered Khurasan and, fifteen years later, seized Baghdad. Gathering groups of Turks as the army moved, the Seljuqs defeated and captured the Byzantine emperor in one of the most significant battles known to history, at Manzikert in 1071. The previous Byzantine heartland, Anatolia, was opened to Turkish migration, and suddenly the nature of the Islamic world was changed.[11] All along the Mediterranean coast and in Egypt, Syria, Iraq, Kurdistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and India, Turks began to replace Arabs and Berbers as leaders of the Islamic world.

The Seljuqs' crowning cultural achievement was the establishment of the sultanate at Konya.[12] Among the Arabs, it was known as Rum (Rome), and in the West as Turchia. Neither name is accurate: the sultanate was a mixture of Byzantine peasants, Turks, Mongols, Turcomans, Armenians, Persians, Kurds, and Arabs. Most were or became Muslims during the sultanate's existence. The rulers

discouraged the use of Arabic and tried to turn their subjects at least culturally into Turks. The small educated class responded by creating a body of Turkish literature, but the writer we know best from that period—Jalal al-Din al-Rumi—did not join the Turkish movement. He wrote in Persian. The world of Islam had long since become multicultural.

Christian attacks on Muslim states began in Spain and lasted for hundreds of years, but better known both in the West and among Muslims is the series of crusades that were launched against Muslims at the other end of the Mediterranean in Syria, Palestine, and Egypt. The first of these crusades was declared by Pope Urban II in a sermon in Clermont, France, in November 1095 in response to an appeal by the Byzantine emperor for volunteer foreign warriors to fight the Seljuq Turks. Suddenly, after centuries of unconcern, the Christian rulers of Europe discovered that the "Holy Land" had been "lost" to Muslims. The time to redeem past inaction seemed propitious, since the Byzantine emperor appeared keen to help, the Fatimid caliphate at Cairo appeared to have lost its vigor, and the Levant coast was divided among feuding warlords. Then there was the popular myth that somewhere off in the unknown East there was a hidden great ally, a secret but sincere Christian known as Prester John, who was ready to come to the Europeans' aid. Meanwhile in Europe, the Norman invasions and the rise of the German warrior class provided apparently limitless numbers of proud but impoverished knights, hungry for honor and greedy for loot, to answer Urban's call. Imbued with his ardor and by their own worldly objectives, they showed their dedication to the liberation of the Holy Land by mounting vicious attacks on defenseless Jews in the ghettoes of Europe.[13]

News of their conduct was not long in reaching the Byzantine emperor, Alexios Komnenos. Seeing them as barbarians—a view shared by the Muslims—he feared they would draw no line between Jews, Muslims, and Eastern Christians. As they marched toward Jerusalem, they pillaged the Byzantine territories along their route. Alexios got rid of one group, the so-called Children's Crusade, by sending them off to fight the Seljuq Turks in Anatolia, where most of them were killed. He did all he could to speed the others on their way and keep them away from his own territories. The Muslim authorities tried to do the same and to evacuate Muslims from the cities in their path, but they often were not quick enough. When the crusaders finally arrived in "Jerusalem the Golden," they immediately surrounded both the main church of the Christians and the main synagogue of the Jews and burned them down with the terrified worshippers still inside. Even those Jews, Christians, and Muslims who surrendered were cut down in an orgy of blood, plunder, and religious

ecstasy.[14]

The state the crusaders founded from the Eastern Christian and Muslim Middle Eastern communities gradually took on a calmer demeanor, but the crusaders themselves were always regarded as ruthless, uncultured, and slovenly barbarians.[15]

For my present purposes, two aspects of the Crusades stand out, and they still influence attitudes throughout the Muslim world: the first is that contemporary Muslims accommodated to the invaders, forming personal relationships with them, joining in Christian religious events, and making alliances with them. The crusaders were a powerful military force, and the Muslim societies of the Middle East were often, as they are today, hostile to one another. There was often a tactical reason for each Muslim ruler to seek support from the crusaders. The fear of betrayal by native leaders remains a pertinent theme in today's politics. That theme resonates throughout nationalist pronouncements, and the word "crusader" remains an evocative political epithet. Spokesmen for the Islamic State and other terrorist groups constantly refer to their opponents as crusaders.

The second theme that emerges from the Crusades is the belief—or hope—that the foreigners would ultimately leave. Slowly, they began to do so. The crusaders were defeated in the Battle of Hatin in 1187—in which most of Palestine was retaken—by the Kurdish sultan of Egypt and Syria, Saladin (Salah al-Din), after nearly a century of intermittent warfare.

Saladin was adopted by anti-imperialist Arab nationalists as their hero after the First World War, and the strategists of the Islamic State today believe that their Western enemies will similarly be worn down and ultimately defeated. In fact, Saladin's victory was limited: the crusader states lingered on long after Saladin had died.

While these major events were taking place, the Middle East was also experiencing another multicultural development, one that would be familiar to us: terrorism. One of the strangest figures we can see—or partly see—in history came to the fore in the mythology we have inherited. (Marco Polo, always to be read with caution, provided some of the original reports.) Hasan al-Sabbah, known as "the Old Man of the Mountain," established a sort of terrorist state scattered in fortresses in the mountains on both the Caspian and Mediterranean coasts. There is much that we do not know about Hasan, and what we think we know is suspect. We believe he was a member of the Ismaili sect of Shiism (headed today by the Aga Khan), but we do not know what he was trying to accomplish. He or his followers apparently attacked the Seljuq Muslims and the incoming crusader Christians with equal ardor. He fascinated both groups, which spun a colorful web of fantasy about him. He was said to have created secret gardens

populated by nymphs where, with the help of drugs, he made his followers believe they were briefly in heaven. This was to prepare them for suicide missions as fedayeen (fidayin) against his enemies. His objectives were obscure then and still are today, but he gave us the word "assassin." A man became an assassin—a *hashshasin*—when doped with hashish to get "a foretaste of the joys of Paradise."[16]

The Turks, Arabs, and crusaders spun fantasies but also, when it suited their purposes, engaged in more practical activities: they employed al-Sabbah's hit men to assassinate their opponents. It is not hard to read into that bit of history some of the problems with which we try to contend today. We shall see in Part 5 that such promoters of violent politics today as Usama bin Ladin and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi not only throw fidayin or assassins against us but dope them with emotions, beliefs, and ideas that are at least as powerful as hashish; at the same time, they cloud our vision with fears much as al-Sabbah did. Disentangling myth from reality has always proven a powerful challenge.

While Christians and Muslims were fighting over Palestine, far off in Central and East Asia, a powerful confederation of Turkish and Mongol tribes had arisen under a man who was perhaps the greatest war leader and conqueror of all time. For a generation, Genghis Khan hurled his armies across Asia. Dwarfing even the great Arab wars of conquest, he conquered China and all of what became the twentieth-century Soviet Union and rampaged through the Middle East, leaving a trail of absolute devastation. One after another the Mongols destroyed the Muslim city-states of Central Asia, crossed through Iran into Kashmir to the south and into Iraq, Syria, and Kurdistan to the east. They virtually wiped out Muslim society everywhere they went. And, in 1258, Genghis Khan's grandson Hulagu Khan razed the great city of Baghdad, slaughtering hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, including the Abbasid caliph. The Syria and Iraq of those years resembled the same devastated areas we see today, and the survivors lived in similar misery.[17]

Hulagu's Mongols were still hostile to Islam—many converted in later centuries—and were far from their base of operations, so, as they moved west, they enrolled in their forces, alongside various Christian groups from the Caucasus and Anatolia, those crusaders who still held out in Antioch. With the help of the crusaders, they captured Aleppo and then Damascus. The only remaining Muslim power in the Middle East was Egypt.

The last venture of the Mongols in the Middle East was to destroy the terrorist state of the assassins. Having done that, Hulagu was about to throw his forces against Egypt—a move that would certainly have changed the Middle East as we know it today—when the ruling

member of the Mongol family died. Abandoning his plans, Hulagu rushed back to Mongolia with most of his army. His departure enabled the Mamluk rulers of Egypt, the successors of Saladin, to attack and defeat the remaining Mongols in the 1260 Battle of Ain Jalut, halfway between Damascus and Jerusalem.

Misery, devastation, and the loss of hope stimulated two Muslim reactions that resonate down to our time. The first of these was announced and carried out by a successor to the ninth-century fundamentalist Hanbal. He was Taqi al-Din bin Taimiyah.

Taimiyah was born in 1263 on what is now the northern frontier of Syria, in the ancient city of Harran. It is a dangerous area today and was just as dangerous eight hundred years ago. Fleeing from immediate danger, Taimiyah's father turned his family into refugees, much as occurs today. There was then, of course, no thought of moving to Europe. Had they tried to do so, they would have found that wars among the petty states there were little different from those in Syria, and, as Muslims, they would have risked being killed. The only available refuge was Damascus, which is where they went after the Mongols were driven out. Understandably, Taimiyah's life and thought were deeply marked by insecurity, and particularly by fear of foreign invasion.

Taimiyah inherited from his father, a judge and a follower of Hanbal, his quest for certainty of belief. A recognized scholar (mufti) of Islamic law at only nineteen years of age, he quickly made both a reputation for scholarship and enemies among the adherents of the other schools of law. Despite the first and because of the second, he was thrown out of his professorship. Going beyond what Hanbal had seen as the central objective of the Muslim leadership, he preached that true believers must not only overturn domestic heretics and strictly enforce the Shariah but also strive (the meaning of the word "jihad") to expel foreign invaders. Because the danger of the Mongols had only receded, not vanished, such local authorities as existed gave him license to preach jihad. At that he excelled.

In 1303, the men Taimiyah inspired contributed to the defeat of the remaining Mongols at a battle in what is now a suburb of Damascus. The battle was hard fought and the victors suffered heavy losses. Like fallen *jihadis* today, the dead were regarded as martyrs. The effect of this battle on Taimiyah's thinking is clear from his subsequent attack on Muslim "deviants," including the Ismailis and other Shiis: fear of local supporters of foreign imperialists still dominates much of the thought and action of his modern followers.

Apparently, Taimiyah became a local hero, but his doctrinal rigidity was too much for the practical men who then ruled Egypt. Like Hanbal before him and the Egyptian fundamentalist Sayyid Qutb in

our time, he was imprisoned by the more “practical” rulers. A year and a half in a dungeon or pit failed to break his spirit; when let out, he confronted his accusers. Imprisoned again, he spent his time proselyting his fellow inmates with his interpretation of Islam, again foreshadowing what his followers, including the self-proclaimed caliph of the Islamic State, have done in prisons established by the rulers in Middle Eastern countries, Russians and Chinese in Central Asia, and Americans in Iraq.

In and out of prison several more times, Taimiyah used his time to write a commentary on the Quran—just as his follower Sayyid Qutb would do when imprisoned by President Gamal Abdel Nasser some 650 years later in the 1960s. Qutb was allowed to continue writing, but Taimiyah was not: when it was discovered that he was developing his thoughts in this way, he was deprived of all reading and writing materials. He soon died, bitterly unhappy.

As had happened with Hanbal, upon Taimiyah’s death almost every inhabitant of the city turned out for his funeral. It was a sign of their agreement with his thought, but what was ironic was that his body was interred in the burial ground of one of the groups who had moved far from the fundamentalism to which he had dedicated his life.

As I will show, the teachings of Hanbal and Taimiyah were echoed and carried into effect in Arabia by the theologian Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab (1703–1787). Today’s Wahhabis, or, as they call themselves, “Unitarians” (*muwahhidun*), think of themselves as continuing the mission of the Prophet Muhammad as interpreted by Hanbal and Taimiyah. In addition to providing the ideological framework that now dominates in Saudi Arabia, the Wahhabis share with the Muslim Brotherhood, the Islamic State, and other fundamentalist movements the beliefs of Hanbal and Taimiyah.

Logically inconsistent with fundamentalism, but often melded into it, was mysticism. Islamic mysticism bore some resemblances to the vision of Saint Francis of Assisi, and mysticism’s followers, like Saint Francis’s, took as their defining symbol the use of rough woolen (*sufi*) garments.

Sufism was a late development in Islam, but its roots reached into the past. From the earliest times, people everywhere sought answers to the mysteries and misadventures of life. Behind chance happenings they sought some pattern or cause. Shamans, witchdoctors, and mystics of various kinds claimed to know the secret paths to understanding, solace, or success and offered to show the path to those who agreed to follow them.

As practiced in Islam, following sometimes meant reforming their lives and changing their expectations. Expiation of sin nearly always figured and was often accomplished by punishment, donation, or

dedication. Withdrawal from "the world" was achieved physically or mentally and for long or short periods, but sometimes the path was staked out by collective or violent action. All of these possibilities were raised in Sufism. Consequently, Sufis differed in their choices: some orders were quiescent, others militant. To hundreds of millions of Muslims, Sufism seemed the only escape from the misery, devastation, and terror of the Mongol invasion. For this reason and because of the appeal of a more sensitive, fulfilling, and emotionally rewarding spiritual life, dozens of separate Sufi orders spread from Central Asia and Southeast Asia across the globe to Somalia and Nigeria. I will discuss in Part 2 their role in the Muslim resistance movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Often charging established regimes to be corrupt, tyrannical, or coopted by foreigners, the Sufis were frequently themselves charged as subversive. They were not the only threats seen by rulers. Rulers often found deadly adversaries in their households. This was largely because of multiple marriage, which encouraged competing wives to incite rivalry among their sons. Much of the tumult of Muslim history arises from this cause. Brothers, cousins, and even sons were both kinsmen and potential murderers. An ancient Indian strategist put the reason memorably. The relatives of rulers, he wrote, "like crabs have a notorious tendency of eating their begetters." Against this unpleasant tendency, those rulers who survived developed elaborate means of defense. One of the recurring themes in the hundreds of books on strategy known as "mirrors for princes," which we associate with Machiavelli, is that a ruler is wise to staff his government with people whose loyalty is to him rather than to his dynasty.[18] Nobles might aspire to rule; servants were less likely to do so. Consequently, rulers often used their household staffs not only to cook their meals but also to perform tasks of government.[19] Throughout the Muslim world, this practice grew into a system almost as peculiar as Hasan al-Sabbah's secret army.

Medieval Muslim rulers took for granted that the most trustworthy person was one who had no political standing, so they often staffed their households, and therefore their governments and armies, with slaves. So useful was this form of military society that it was copied from India to Central Asia and on to Egypt and North Africa. It had the unintended effect of bringing into the Islamic community large numbers of peoples of other religions and ethnic groups: Turks, Circassians, Tatars, and other peoples from Central Asia; a variety of Africans, Greeks, and Slavs from Eastern Europe; and even some from Western Europe and England. In Muslim India, Egypt, and the Ottoman Empire, hundreds of thousands of these people staffed governments and armies. Some of the "possessed" (*mamluks*), despite

their lowly origins, were men of such ability that they rose to become the equivalents of prime ministers and chiefs of staff. Others overthrew the rulers who possessed them and became rulers themselves. We see the warrior-ruler-slave—the mamluks were all three—all over the Muslim world. Egypt was ruled by such people for nearly four hundred years, and the rulers of some of the Indian states began as mamluks. Many of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Barbary corsairs were English or French men who had defected (and were thus known as *renegados*) or been kidnapped and turned into mamluks.

It wasn't only the importation of people that tied the medieval Muslim world to the larger world. Long before the coming of Islam, Arab and Persian seafaring merchants had ventured across the Indian Ocean. Their ancestors had discovered and used the monsoon winds at least by Roman times, as we know from the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea,* one of several guidebooks for sailors and merchants. Muslim merchants made the Indian Ocean their lake. As an Indian historian imagined native Hindus observing their arrival in India,

> Princes, anxious to improve their commerce, accorded generous treatment to the people who commanded the main trade routes of the civilized world. Bearded men in long skirted tunics, congregating for prayer at fixed intervals, in a rectangular building which contained no idols, and adhering to no caste rules, presented a sight whose novelty wore out with the passage of time. As they established colonies and multiplied, they became an integral part of the population.[20]

Seeking spices and selling pearls and other luxuries, merchants swung down through the Strait of Malacca between Sumatra and the Malay Peninsula and established colonies throughout Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. They sailed up the east coast of Asia to Shanghai and other Chinese cities. Canton was a regular port of call for Arab and Persian merchants; it is from their rendering "Shankhay" that we get our spelling of the name of the city the Chinese called "the swollen sea," Shanghai. The bazaars of the Ta'ng dynasty's great metropolis of Xian were filled with Muslim merchants and their exotic goods.[21]

When the Arab traveler Ibn Battuta set out for China in the 1330s, he found everywhere well-established colonies of Muslims and Chinese who engaged in long-range commerce by ship. He marveled at the sophistication of the Indian Ocean junks in comparison to the ships of the Mediterranean. Some transported up to a thousand passengers and crew quartered in as many as four decks, which even had private lavatories. Almost as astonishing to him was the easy relationship of people from several nations and religions: the agent for a Chinese ship he once took was a Syrian Arab. And when he finally

reached China, he discovered that in every city "is a quarter for Muslims in which they live by themselves, and in which they [are allowed to] have mosques."

The merchants who made Indian Ocean voyages were apparently from the south of Arabia and the Persian Gulf. The Meccan merchants to the north, sitting at the center of their commercial empire, seem to have known little about this faraway adventure. Their early fascination with India and the Far East is demonstrated to us by an amusing episode reported in the time of the second caliph, Umar. A spirited and ambitious man who was constantly pushing to expand the new Islamic empire, Umar instructed the governor of Iraq to add what he then thought of as "India"—Hind, the northwestern province of Sind—to his domain. In one of the most cogent refutations of a proposed military venture ever recorded, the governor is said to have replied that trying to effect "regime change" in India would be a disaster. "Don't do it," he told the caliph, because in India, "water is scarce, the fruits are poor and the robbers are bold; if few troops are sent there they will be slain, if many, they will starve."[22]

What really astonished the Arab and Persian Muslim traders was Hinduism. Hinduism is the very antithesis of Islam. Whereas Islam makes an absolute proclamation of monotheism, Hinduism is polytheistic. It portrays its multiple gods as idols, whereas, as the Indian historian who imagined the encounter I have just quoted pointed out, followers of Islam "congregat[ed] for prayer at fixed intervals, in a rectangular building which contained no idols." The Quran clearly spells out how polytheist idol worshipers are to be dealt with: they must be forced to convert, and if they refuse, they are to be killed. Early in the eleventh century, when Hindus refused to give up their gods, Muslims, particularly recently converted Turks and Afghans, killed thousands of them and destroyed their temples.[23]

Even in those early days, it was becoming clear that the sword is not effective against religious belief or political ideas. Military "solutions" kill a lot of people but rarely win wars. Even more rarely do they solve the problems at which they were aimed. Few rulers in history have absorbed this lesson, but one of the wiser contemporary rulers then did. Mahmud, the ruler of the Afghan city-state of Ghazni, soon realized that Muslims would have to coexist with Hindus if they were to stay in India. His strategy cost nothing: he simply pretended to be unaware that the Hindus were polytheists and worshipped statues. He "awarded" them the status of Christians and Jews as though they too were a "People of the Book [the Old Testament]." This decision created an acceptable degree of peace in India for hundreds of years.

Two groups of Indians did their part to maintain this peace. On the

upper level of Hindu society, princes and great landowners accepted offers to participate in the empire. Muslim rulers, like their British successors, found it often cheaper to rule by delegating some functions to acceptable natives. While these surrogate rulers practiced Hinduism in public, many privately married Muslims, pledged allegiance to Muslim rulers, and accommodated to their system of rule.

On the lower rungs of society, millions of Hindu "untouchables" (the *achuta* or *dalit* caste) converted to Islam. For such people, conversion amounted to liberation. They escaped the tyranny of the caste system, exchanging lives of virtual slavery for the brotherhood (*ikhwaniyah*) that is one of the most attractive aspects of Islam. Millions of others staked out a non-Arab form of Islam by joining mystical Sufi orders.

Turks expressed little curiosity about mysticism; their principal interest was power. In 1206 a Turkish warrior by the name of Qutb al-Din Aibak proclaimed himself sultan of Delhi and established a dynasty of mamluks. His kingdom is perhaps best remembered for one of its members—Qutb al-Din's granddaughter Raziya was the only Muslim woman to rule an Indian state. The Aibak state was the harbinger of the great Mughal dynasty that the Muslim conqueror Babur established in 1526.

Babur was surely one of the most extraordinary conquerors in history. A descendant of two of the most ruthless Mongol rulers, Genghis Khan on his mother's side and Tamerlane on his father's, he was a man of great culture.[24] Born in Fergana in what is now Uzbekistan shortly before Christopher Columbus sailed for America, he became a noted poet in Chagatai, a branch of eastern Turkish, and was also fluent in Persian and probably also in Arabic. At the same time, he was a military strategist who welded small, unreliable tribal forces into armies. With them, he won the great Battle of Panipat in 1526, which enabled him to establish the Mughal Empire. He left his successors both his beautiful gardens and his remarkable personal history.[25]

A century later, in 1615, the first English ambassador to the court at Agra, Sir Thomas Roe, thought that the Mughal Empire Babur had founded was one of the wonders of the world.[26] Coming from relatively poor but intellectually vibrant England, Roe was dazzled by the display of Mughal gold and jewels but noted India's lack of technical skills. That weakness, one of the main reasons the nations of the South came under European colonial rule, was already evident to this perceptive diplomat in the early seventeenth century.

Like the Chinese emperors to whom the English tried to sell wool, arms, and tools, Babur was amused by European technology but unwilling to pay a social or cultural price to acquire it. Majesty, in his

eyes, was a composite of military manpower, worldly wealth, and artistic splendor. In India, that splendor reached its heights under Babur's grandson, Shah Abbas, when its writers, artists, and artisans produced a flood of literature in Arabic, Persian, Hindi, and what became Urdu; marvelous miniature paintings; and grand and graceful buildings, including the architectural masterpiece known as the Taj Mahal. Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the Mughal Empire was the way it enabled the blending of cultures: from the rough beginning of the Mongol past, refined by the influence of Iranian literature and language, came cosmopolitan refinement.

The Iranian civilization, too, was notable for its refinement. This is particularly manifested in its beautiful literature, which spilled over into Turkish and Arabic and which also captivated nineteenth-century English, German, Russian, and French writers. But what is most striking in Iranian culture, as in Indian culture, are its miniature paintings and massive architecture.

Throughout its long history, Iran has gloried in its cities. Time after time, new cities have been founded and have waxed only to decline or be obliterated by invading armies or massive earthquakes, but the urban tradition has remained vigorous. The most famous and beautiful of all Iranian cities was Isfahan, which the great Safavid Iranian ruler Shah Abbas made his capital in 1598. It was home to nearly a million people, four times the population of contemporary London and Paris. Just as Tsar Peter did when building Saint Petersburg, Abbas had gathered the world's foremost architects, master builders, and artisans to create Isfahan. Indeed, Abbas cast his net even more widely than Peter. In addition to bringing in Florentines and Venetians, he imported Indian and Chinese builders. The hundreds of mosques, public baths, and caravanserais built under his patronage were considered marvels of their time. Most impressive of all was the enormous central square, the Maidan-i Shah, covering six times the area of Venice's Piazza San Marco. Used as a polo ground and park for storytellers, jugglers, acrobats, shoppers, and poets, it was lit on festive occasions by as many as fifty thousand candles while orchestras held forth on the surrounding balconies. An Iranian saying from that era caught the spirit of the city: "Isfahan is half the world" (*Isfahan nisf-i jihan*).

Similar civic pride was not so notable in the early days of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottomans had to fight hard for their success; indeed, they came close to being completely defeated by their distant kinsmen, the Mongols. In 1402 at the Battle of Ankara, Tamerlane, a descendant of Genghis Khan, captured the Ottoman leader and carried him away in an iron cage. This defeat did not stop the Turkish advance toward Constantinople—and ultimately toward Vienna—but

it did delay the Turks by about half a century. Some scholars have asserted that this delay was crucial in the passing to Europe of the Greek classics that were preserved in Constantinople and were a major contribution to the Renaissance. True or not, the Turks in time developed a respect for the great city, and they filled Istanbul, the Turkified reincarnation of Constantinople, with great mosques and palaces that overwhelmed visitors from Western Europe.[27]

What particularly marked the Ottoman Empire in its heyday, however, was not its architectural, literary, or artistic refinement but its enormous extent and vast power. Europeans were particularly impressed by its governmental and military system. Richard Knolles, the first English historian of the Turks, called them "the present terror of the world."[28] Ottoman armies came close to taking Vienna on two occasions and occupied most of the Balkan Peninsula for centuries. The standing army, particularly its artillery, and its navy were thought to be among the most potent military forces in the world in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. To man their army, the Ottoman rulers drafted or kidnapped suitable young men from among the non-Muslim, mainly Greek Christian, Balkan communities, converted them to Islam, trained them in the martial arts, and employed them either as soldiers or as what we would call civil servants. Some of these men rose to the most senior positions of the Ottoman state.

In the sixteenth century, the Ottoman Turkish empire, the Safavid Iranian empire, and the Mughal Turco-Mongol empire of India were among the greatest states of the world. They were actively courted by some European states and bitterly fought by others.[29] Then, from roughly the end of the seventeenth century, all three began the decline that opened the way for the North to move south.

CHAPTER 5

The North Moves South

Until the fifteenth century, the Muslim world was composed of some of the world's richest and most advanced societies. The Mughal Empire alone at least matched China and far surpassed Europe in the production of wealth. Iran boasted a literary and artistic standard that was the exemplar in Asia. The Ottoman Empire controlled an area about the size of Europe and did so both relatively economically and with a degree of tolerance unknown in Europe. Islam sat lightly but firmly on the Crimean Tatars and on the peoples of Southeast Asia and the Philippines.

Rural people in the Muslim world as a whole closely resembled their European counterparts. French peasants lived in villages as African and Asian peasants did and worked surrounding fields with simple plows pulled by draft animals or by hand; their standard of living, at least in food consumption, was probably about the same. Both were largely illiterate and both were organized in religiously based traditions.

However, there were two significant differences in the European and Afro-Asian experiences. The first was a result of the shortage of water; much of the population of North Africa and of West and Central Asia lived in widely separated villages that often depended in part on transhumance or were nomadic. European villagers, who had access to rivers, were able to tap ground water, and were fed by relatively heavy rain, were more densely placed and more fixed. There were essentially no European nomads. Second, in urban life, these proportions were reversed. Cities in the Muslim world were far larger than in Europe. Constantinople (later known as Istanbul), Isfahan, and several Indian cities had reached a million people, whereas European cities were still small. Only Venice and Milan had two hundred thousand inhabitants. Parisians numbered about seventy thousand, and the population of London was about half that size. Seville had about thirty-five thousand and Lisbon perhaps twenty-five thousand

residents. Urban people made up only about one in twenty Europeans in the sixteenth century; nineteen in twenty were peasant farmers or serfs. Muslim Asia was not quite the reverse, but it was considerably more urban than Christian Europe.[1]

Size mattered. Several of the Muslim societies, led by Mughal India, developed coherent, nation-wide systems of distribution unmatched in Europe. In the manufacture and distribution of textiles, Mughal India had already in the sixteenth century created a pattern of economic life that was moving slowly toward something like the eighteenth-century European Industrial Revolution. Then, rather suddenly, the North began to change, while the South did not.

The causes of the transformation of Europe were complex, but one contrast between what was happening in the North and what was happening in the South is clear: Europe began, even before the Renaissance, a series of small technological changes; then, as the value of the changes began to be recognized, Europeans first promoted them and finally applied them in the Industrial Revolution. Consider one small but very important change that was unmatched in the South: eyeglasses.

Eyeglasses were invented in the last years of the thirteenth century in Italy. Gradually it occurred to craftsmen, who had gone through years of apprenticeship before mastering a craft, that if they wore glasses, they could extend their productive lives by several years. Considered as a whole, this transformation effectively added something like 20 percent to the skilled labor force.[2]

The “revolution” in eyesight rippled through the economy of Europe. Finding out about the benefits of glasses and other inventions depended on communication. Word of mouth was inefficient because those who needed them, craftsmen, were not likely to travel. So two things happened: The first was a revolution in thought. If there was a problem, people began to believe that a solution could be sought. The second was that when a solution was found in one area, people in other areas wanted to hear about it.

The ability of a skilled workman in Brussels to learn what his counterpart in Florence was doing depended on a different form of communication. The answer was the advent of printing on a large scale. While, as I have mentioned, tenth-century Baghdad had a thriving book publishing industry based on the Chinese invention of paper, most of the production dealt with literary and religious themes. Five centuries later, Johannes Gutenberg is credited with starting a revolution. He was not alone. Others entrepreneurs were also developing printing organizations.

European printers had produced about forty thousand books, of which many were similarly devoted to religion. The most famous is

Gutenberg's Bible. But an increasing number were devoted to conveying information. By the later years of the sixteenth century, how-to-do-it books started to become available on a range of tools and techniques. A sort of market for ideas had been created, and book writers and printers catered to it. Because the need for information was widely recognized, the books were widely distributed.

In addition to adapting the content of books, those in the book industry were faced with the challenge of producing them: not only paper (instead of vellum or parchment) but also movable type (instead of calligraphy on wood blocks) became standard. To do a better job, type began to be improved. The steps must have been small, but making the type stronger involved creating amalgams of metals. The determination of the consistency of such compounds and what they could accomplish required experiments in chemistry and production. Many must have failed, but some succeeded. With each success, not only could printers produce far more pages than ever before, they had already begun to introduce illustrations in the late fifteenth century. With woodcuts and steel engravings, books offered diagrams and plans explaining how to make implements and build structures. Maps gave a new sense of the world of commerce and exploration. They almost certainly also gave a sense of identity beyond the local neighborhood and so presaged the later growth of nationalism.

Printers found that if they replaced workmen with machines powered by energy instead of muscle, they could produce far more and do it more cheaply. The waterwheel thus came into widespread use to heat metal and produce paper, and, as it did so, the impulse arose to make it more efficient. Throughout the North, particularly in Italy, France, Germany, the Low Countries, and England, each small step led to the next. Long before the Industrial Revolution, a revolution in thought was in process.

But in the South these activities seemed unimportant. As I have pointed out, when the first British ambassador, Sir Thomas Roe, arrived in the Mughal capital of Agra in 1615, he found the Indians uninterested in technology. They were amused by mechanical clocks but did not think machines—except for weapons—of serious import. They did not need machines: they could call on large populations of artisans and had access to plenty of human and animal power. The failure to grasp the importance or the means of mobilizing equipment was one of the main reasons the nations of the South eventually came under European colonial rule, as was already evident to this perceptive diplomat in the early seventeenth century.

When the British showed off such grand devices as wheeled carriages, the Mughal emperor Jahangir was amused but unwilling to pay a social or cultural price to acquire them. After all, if you had

elephants mounted with comfortably cushioned howdas, you did not need gilded carriages; if you had legions of calligraphers at your beck and call, you did not need printing presses; and if you could marshal masses of peasants to prod their bullocks, you did not need to upgrade your waterwheels. For the rulers and the small upper crust of Indian society who effectively controlled the Indian economy, the necessities of life were bountifully at hand. What one craved were refinements: jewels, silks, and other exotic goods. The rich and powerful were uninterested in the tools and techniques that the new class of entrepreneurs and master craftsmen of Europe were inventing; they had unlimited manpower to weave cloth, make paper, construct buildings, and fight wars. Mughal India saw no need of entrepreneurs like those then coming to the fore in Europe.

The Ottoman Turks were perhaps even less open to European influences. Their policy was to turn European slaves (*kapi kular*) into quasi-Turkish janissaries (*yeniçeris*) rather than having Turks copy the ways of Europeans. That policy produced the bureaucracy and the army. There was little room or scope for technological innovation or organizational reordering except in military affairs. The aim of the system was preservation, not change.

The South did not reach out to the North. Although the Mediterranean was generally open and usually safe, it was Christian and Jewish merchants, not Turks, Lebanese, Egyptians, or Indians, who sailed it. In part this was because Muslims were in mortal danger in Europe, whereas European Christian and Jewish merchants were able to move relatively freely in Muslim-controlled areas. Moreover, Muslim merchants also had little incentive to visit European markets. Europe offered little that Asians or Africans wanted. It was the Europeans who sought oriental and Southern goods.

As they sailed from the little ports that dotted the Spanish, French, and Italian coasts, the Europeans bought raw silk from Mount Lebanon and the transshipped spices of India and Indonesia through Egypt and loaded cargoes of food grains from North Africa and sugar from the Levant. Vibrantly colored cotton cloth was the rage of European fashion, and carpets were everywhere regarded as works of art. During the eighteenth century, English consumption of tea rose from 122,000 pounds to 16 million pounds. As P. J. Marshall has pointed out, “Bengal trade had grown enormously in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, as sales of Bengal cotton cloth in Europe rose spectacularly. Until the emergence of European manufacturing industry at the very end of the eighteenth century, Bengal’s trade with Europe was set in a pattern which consisted essentially of the exchange of piece goods and silk for silver rather than for manufactured European exports.”[3] In some years, silver was

the only export from England to the South. In 1601, for example, about three-quarters of English exports to the South were silver. Europe produced almost nothing that the people of the South wanted to buy.

Like the Chinese emperor to whom the English tried to sell wool (which in the eighteenth century amounted to about 80 percent of English exports), the Indian emperors and the wealthy class were uninterested. They had silk and cotton, and if they wanted wool, they opted for cashmere.

Buying with silver was difficult because the only European source of silver was in Eastern Europe and the mines there were nearly exhausted. Gold was in even shorter supply. So difficult was gold to obtain that during the long Dark Ages, no gold coins were minted in Western Europe. The first gold coin since the collapse of the Roman Empire was the *florino d'oro* struck in Florence in 1252. But for centuries, coins were rare. So few were they that sometimes the lack of them forced the closure of trade fairs or stymied commercial ventures.

The best-known source of gold was Africa. As far as is known, it was 1470 when the first European merchant visited Timbuktu. That fabled city was then the market for the gold dust brought up from the Niger River. The merchants in Timbuktu sent salt south by camel caravan to exchange for gold. It was that trade that the Europeans first tried to break into and then circumvented by sailing down the African coast. Gold was the first of the lures that Prince Henry of Portugal sent his navigators to bring home.

Even as late as the end of the eighteenth century, long after the Spanish conquest of the Americas produced a flood of gold and silver, Europeans thought that hoards of gold, not production, were the bases of wealth. The dominant European economic doctrine, mercantilism, held that specie exactly equated to wealth and power. The vigorous explorers and pirates who dominate our view of the history of the sixteenth century were almost literally chasing the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. And, while that quest may not have accounted for the push of the North into the South, it certainly was a powerful incentive.

Already in the first years of the sixteenth century, Christopher Columbus had caught what became Europe's obsession. As he wrote, "Gold is a wonderful thing! Whoever possesses it is master of everything he desires. With gold, one can even get souls into paradise." [4]

Thus, we can account for the English jubilation over Robert Clive's conquest of Muslim Bengal, the eastern province of the Mughal Empire, where he seized tons of gold and jewels. When later testifying

in Parliament about what amounted to piracy—and personal corruption—he said that he had "walked though vaults which were thrown open to me alone, piled on either hand with gold and jewels."[5] Clive and his fellow venturers helped themselves to about a quarter of a million pounds sterling, or, in today's purchasing power, well over a billion dollars. Even junior officers, some only fifteen years old, received what were, in the currency of the time, fortunes. So plentiful was the loot the British acquired that when they returned to England, the Nabobs (as they became known, from the Farsi word *nawab*) virtually transformed the landscape with their grand palaces.[6]

What Clive began did not stop with the initial seizure. The British stripped the Mughal Empire of virtually all of its gold and silver; Clive and his colleagues kept a large part of the loot, but "another half a million pounds in silver poured annually from the soil of Bengal into the bottoms of British vessels, dramatically reversing the specie drain that had so long distressed Western European mercantilists."[7] As the popular American historian Will Durant wrote in 1930, "The British conquest of India was the invasion and destruction of a high civilization by a trading company utterly without scruple or principle, careless of art and greedy for gain overrunning with fire and sword a country temporarily disordered and helpless, bribing and murdering, annexing and stealing, and beginning that career of illegal and legal plunder" that became British India.[8]

Parliament was torn over what to do with its new conquest. It wanted both to benefit and to take a moral stance. So it did what politicians often do: it adopted contrary positions. In 1784, it mandated that "to pursue schemes of conquest and extension of dominion in India is contrary to the wish, the honour, and policy of the British nation," but at the same time it legalized the conquests made by the British East India Company.[9] As a modern Indian historian has written, since "the determination of 'justice' or 'rights' was necessarily left to the *ex parte* decision of the Paramount Power [Britain, the statement of principle] . . . practically gave a free rein to the galloping horse of British imperialism in India."[10]

The French were somewhat slower than the British, and the pickings in Algiers were far less than those in Bengal, but when the French invaded Algiers in 1830, they immediately looted the ruler's stored gold and silver. The then French monarch said that the reason for the attack was to avenge an insult to its consul by the Algerian ruler, but vengeance was clearly not a burning issue, since the French waited for three years to exact it. Money per se was not the only object of the French attack. Land and other riches figured as well. But, whether the French knew of the ruler's treasury in advance (which was highly likely) or not, imperialism proved highly profitable. As

Wilfrid Blunt wrote in his spirited book on the Algerian resistance, the French found "boxes filled to overflowing with ingots of gold and silver, piles of gold coins, of jewelry and plate lay in wild disorder—nearly fifty million francs' worth, and more than enough to pay for the whole cost of the expedition. That, at least, was the amount officially recovered; but there seems little doubt that the superior officers indulged in a good deal of private looting . . . the report [of a commission of inquiry] has never been published."[11] The amount that was declared amounted to seven thousand kilograms of gold and one hundred thousand kilograms of silver.

The European lust after the riches of the South did not stop with gold or silver. *The Arabian Nights* had suggested many other delights to be had in its fabled cities. Human beings were avidly sought. Already in Renaissance Italy, wealthy townspeople had staffed their palaces with "blackamoors," Muslim pages, maids, cooks, porters, and concubines from Africa and Asia. That human commerce was on a small scale. What raised slave hunting to a massive enterprise was a change of tastes. At the top of the list was sugar. Europe had a sweet tooth.

Already in the thirteenth century, sugar was being produced for the European market at the eastern end of the Mediterranean in Egypt and Syria and on the island of Cyprus. It was a luxury product that few people could afford. To reduce costs and enlarge the market, investors began to move production westward. So it was that in or about 1420, the father-in-law of Columbus established a sugar plantation on the island of Madeira.

Growing, gathering, hauling, and processing sugarcane were labor-intensive activities. The cost of hiring enough Europeans to perform them made sugar too expensive to be profitable. The search for the source of gold had pointed toward an answer for sugar: the first Portuguese leap southward—which the Portuguese thought would put them on top of the source of gold—came in 1434 when a small, undecked sailing boat equipped with oars managed to round Cape Bajador. Eight hundred miles downwind and seven years later the Portuguese carried out their first slave raid.

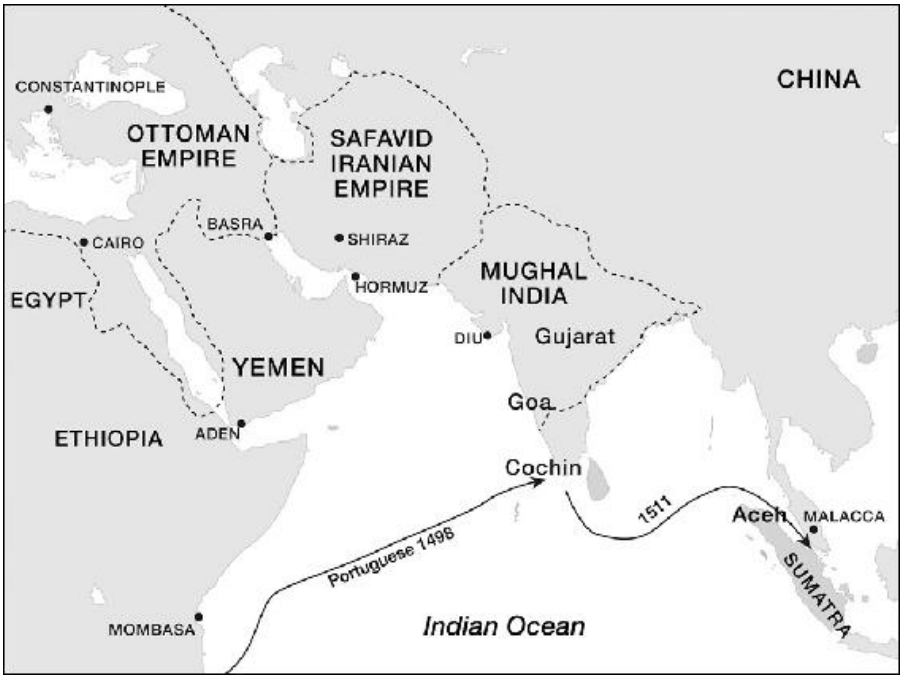
We know little about who the slaves were, but the areas from which they were often taken were in part Muslim. As each area was hunted out, the Portuguese plunged farther and farther south. In 1487 Bartolomeu Dias rounded the cape. It is probable that this success convinced the Portuguese government to turn down Columbus's proposal that they sponsor his voyage to the New World: they did not need Columbus; they were already on the way to fabled Cathay.

On his return (stopping first in Portugal), Columbus reported that the natives of the islands he visited might be used in the production of

sugar. And the methods of his successors in the Caribbean were later to be adapted to the production of tea in Sri Lanka (aka Ceylon) and India and of spices in Java and the Spice Islands (the Moluccas). When Africa did not supply enough slaves at an acceptable cost, the Dutch began slave raids in Sri Lanka. The British followed with what might be called "slavery light"—that is, indentured labor by Indians who were recruited on the brink of starvation during the frequent famines administered by the British government of India.

While the searches for gold and cheap labor were certainly major incentives, imperialism was also propelled by strategy, religion, and momentum. Actions that were begun in the name of religion often morphed into strategy and then continued to be carried out long after the reason for them had lapsed. To see this, take a short excursion with me into Portuguese history.

The first Portuguese attack on Africa was against the little port of Ceuta in 1418. It was justified in terms of religion. The "Moors" or Muslims had been largely driven out of the Iberian Peninsula. The Portuguese believed them to be wicked, sinful people who denied the truth faith and who therefore should be hunted down and exterminated. Following them into Africa also seemed a logical strategic move. Ceuta was to be a sort of plug that would prevent another attack like the Berbers had carried out on Spain in the distant past. But Ceuta is today, seven centuries later, still a Portuguese colony. There is no African movement or state that could threaten Portugal. Ceuta has no strategic role and is a net drain on the Portuguese economy. And yet, to give it up would be, as successive Portuguese governments have judged, to suffer a psychological defeat. So each Portuguese government keeps on doing what the previous government did, staying put.



From at least the ninth century until the fifteenth century, the Indian Ocean was virtually a Muslim lake. Scores of port cities engaged in local and long-distance trade within an area stretching from Shanghai to Mombasa and from the Philippines to Aden. In the early sixteenth century, the Portuguese sailed into the Indian Ocean, and in 1530, they proclaimed their Indian Ocean empire and sent a viceroy to rule it.

Portuguese imperialism in South and Southeast Asia also had a religious motivation or at least a religious justification, but from the beginning it was driven by economic, strategic, and prestige-related motivations. And the Portuguese kept at it as long as they could—that is, until the Spaniards, Dutch, French, and British drove them out.

In 1497 Vasco da Gama sailed into the Indian Ocean. Two aspects of his trip command our attention: first, he was short-circuiting the spice route. That route traditionally led from the Spice Islands in what is today Indonesia, South India, and Sri Lanka, where pepper, cloves, cumin, nutmeg, mace, and cinnamon were grown. Arab or Iranian dhows or Chinese junks took the spices to south Arabia, where they were loaded on camels and taken by caravan to Mecca, across the Red Sea by boat to Egypt, and again by caravan to Alexandria, where they were shipped to Venice to be distributed throughout Europe. At each stage merchants, rulers, caravan organizers, and bedouin tribes imposed a toll or extracted a profit. We can measure the cost because on its return around the tip of Africa directly to Portugal, da Gama's ship yielded a profit of 1,600 times the investment.

When news of this astounding profit leaked out—the Portuguese

treated everything about their voyages to the South as state secrets—the rulers of Spain, France, England, and Holland were eager to follow. Portugal was not able to stop them, but it wanted to be sure that the old route was firmly closed. So, in 1502, the Portuguese interdicted the Red Sea. The Mamluk rulers of Egypt saw this as a mortal blow to their commerce and in a remarkable move appealed to the pope to stop the Portuguese. The sultan warned that if the Portuguese closed the Red Sea to their ships, they would destroy the Christian holy places in Palestine. Instead of trying to stop the Portuguese, Pope Julius II passed the threat on to them. King Manuel I (known as Manuel O Afortunado), who was already implementing a severe anti-Muslim and anti-Jewish policy in Portugal, sent word to the Mamluks that he would send his fleet to destroy Mecca and Madinah. That set off a battle between the Portuguese and the Mamluk navy. The Portuguese triumphed in 1509. At that point, the Venetians, whose wealth also depended on the spice trade, began to supply the Mamluks with military equipment. But the Portuguese held all the winning cards: its heavy ships armed with cannon, which the light dhows of the Mamluks could not carry, and the establishment of a network of military bases radiating out from the southern Arabian port of Aden.

The second important aspect of the Portuguese advance into the South is the compliance of the Muslims. The Portuguese could not have succeeded in penetrating the Indian Ocean or establishing their empire there without the help of Muslim (and Hindu) natives. On Madagascar, just after he rounded the Cape of Good Hope, da Gama recruited an Arab or Indian Muslim pilot, who knew the pattern and timing of monsoon winds, to guide him to the Indian port-city Calicut. That Indian Ocean pilot was the first of many natives who helped the Portuguese and thereafter the British, Dutch, and French conquer their societies. As M. N. Pearson has written,

> Throughout the century [of the Portuguese conquest] on Portuguese ships both naval and trade, the crews and even the soldiers were more often local people than metropolitan Portuguese. Even on the huge carracks bound for Portugal there would be only a handful of Portuguese or *mestiço* (Eurasian) officers. On big expeditions there would be at least as many local Indian troops as Portuguese.[12]

With Muslim, Chinese, and naive Christian and Jewish refugee help, the Portuguese plunged into the world of the Indian Ocean with messianic fervor, greed, and ferocity. As many of his successors would do, da Gama said he was coming to "spread the Christian faith."[13] For nearly a century, he and his successors traded, pillaged, raped, and killed throughout the Indian Ocean. In one encounter, a Portuguese commander plundered a Muslim cargo ship. In riposte, the Calicut

natives—known to the Portuguese as “Moors,” their term for North African Muslims—killed the resident Portuguese merchants. Infuriated, the Portuguese bombarded the port. When da Gama returned from Portugal with more warships, he seized a number of Muslim merchant ships and, as the historian Stanley Wolpert described it, in 1502 he “cut off the hands, ears and noses of some eight hundred ‘Moorish’ seamen, sending the lot to the *zemorin’s* [the local ruler’s] palace for his highness’s ‘curry.’ Such orgies of piracy and plunder served to secure Portugal’s direct route to the East and assured an uninterrupted supply of pepper and cloves.”[14]

The Dutch would soon follow the Portuguese. By 1601 they had established themselves on Java and Sumatra and seized the Spice Islands from the Portuguese. After years of cooperation with the English, the Dutch abandoned their claims on South India and devoted their energies to what we now call Indonesia. To man their plantations, they also followed the Portuguese practice of slavery; but instead of using Africa as the source, they kidnapped or bought slaves in Ceylon and South India.

For the Muslim world, the European Age of Exploration was an increasingly bitter time. As the nations of the world’s North gained in relative power, they thrust into the South, destroying native states, upending societies, and suppressing religious orders.

Far away in Central Asia, Tsar Ivan the Terrible began Russia’s march south in 1552 by conquering the Muslim city-state of Kazan. His successors, one after another, overwhelmed Muslim societies and killed or starved millions of Muslims.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the English had acquired the means—often by piracy—to dominate trade with the Middle East. As the great English economist John Maynard Keynes wrote, piracy was the basis of English overseas trade: “The booty brought back by Drake in the *Golden Hind* may fairly be considered the fountain and origin of British Foreign Investment.”[15] It financed the Levant Company, from which was formed the East India Company that would conquer India and destroy the Mughal Empire.

By the end of the eighteenth century, the Portuguese and the Spanish moves had lost their dynamism, while the French and the British had gained an overwhelming military, commercial, and organizational advantage. For them, as for the Russians, Muslim India was the ultimate prize. But the road to India was blocked by Muslim states that had to be subdued. These states lagged far behind Europe in technology and organization. Partly blinded by their vision of their past, the Muslim rulers and their medieval armies almost literally did not know what hit them. In the east, Peter the Great and Catherine defeated the horsemen of Asia in battle after battle. The Russians were

matched by the French in the west. In one of the most colorful battles of all time, the gloriously dressed and splendidly mounted Mamluk horsemen of Egypt charged Napoleon's artillery. They were slaughtered.

It has been estimated that in the middle of the eighteenth century India produced about a quarter of the world's wealth, while Britain produced less than 3 percent. Then the Industrial Revolution began a major transformation, indeed a reversal of the terms of trade between the North and the South. Local manufacture in the South was driven out and replaced by European goods and services. As Shashi Tharoor has written, "Britain's rise for 200 years was financed by the depredations in India. . . . Britain's Industrial Revolution was built on the destruction of India's thriving manufacturing industries. . . . The British destruction of textile competition from India led to the first great deindustrialization of the modern world . . . master weavers became beggars."[16] Whereas India had supplied colorful cloth to England, it and most of the South now bought cloth from England and paid for it mainly with raw materials. All over the South a revolution in tastes and styles quickly followed. The French-manufactured fez replaced the locally made turban; Yemen coffee beans gave way to coffee imported from French colonies; the Kashmiri shawl, the mark of a gentleman, went out of style. Even the bedouin's head cloths were woven in Birmingham. In the one year of 1833 an estimated ten thousand men—perhaps 20 percent of the skilled workforce—were forced into idleness in Damascus and Aleppo. Traditional trade routes were abandoned or reversed. By 1854 French and British steamers had, in the words of a British consul, "annihilated the local carrying trade," and the last camel caravan went from Baghdad to Damascus in 1857.[17]

These changes caused a dramatic fall in the standard of living and health of the native populations. In India, William Digby wrote that nineteenth-century peasants got only about half as much to eat as their grandfathers and even less than their great-grandfathers. Even the leading English strategist of imperialism, Thomas Babington Macaulay, commented that "thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness."[18]

What happened economically was extended and formalized militarily. When the Egyptians struck out on their own to create a modern industrial sector, the British intervened militarily to suppress it.[19]

In India, Britain first conquered Bengal and then set about destroying the great Mughal Empire. When the Indians revolted in 1857, the British killed hundreds of thousands of villagers, murdered the entire ruling family, and then incorporated the Mughal Empire

into the British Empire. Already intent on blocking Russian expansion, the British then pushed toward Central Asia and the Middle East. They fought Afghan Muslims along the Northwest Frontier for generations; took over and ruled Egypt; defeated the Muslim revivalist movement, the Mahdiyah, in the Sudan; established hegemony in the Persian Gulf; dominated Iran; and ultimately acquired control over what became Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine. Some conquests were particularly violent: in Afghanistan, the British killed hundreds of thousands of Afghans, and in Iraq they wiped out Arab tribesmen with poison gas. Only on the Northwest Frontier was warfare even partly a Great Game.

For the Italians in Libya, war was no game; it became genocide. Benito Mussolini, as leader of the Fascist Party and Il Duce, tried in nearly twenty years of counterinsurgency to wipe out the Islamic revival movement, the Sanusiyah, and killed two-thirds of the population. Other colonial campaigns were just as ugly.

In Java, when the natives tried to reassert their independence, the Dutch killed about three hundred thousand "rebels" between 1835 and 1840; they similarly suppressed tens of thousands of Sumatran "rebels" between 1873 and 1914. In Algeria, after the bitter fifteen-year war that began in 1830, the French stole all the farmlands, razed hundreds of villages, massacred untold numbers of natives, and imposed an apartheid regime on the survivors. In Central Asia, the Russians and Chinese impoverished or drove away previously thriving populations, while in their bitter war in the Caucasus, recounted by Leo Tolstoy, the Russians virtually wiped out whole societies and drove into exile perhaps a million Circassians.

"Subduing the natives" was a brutal affair that reached its nadir in the Congo, where roughly one in ten inhabitants was a Muslim. Between 1884 and 1908 the Belgians are estimated to have killed at least twice as many natives as the Nazis killed Jews and Roma—some ten to fifteen million people. They also engaged in systematic rape, cut off the hands or feet of unproductive natives, and stripped the Congo of raw materials.[20] In a less dramatic but more destructive move, the British created "what one can only call the British Colonial Holocaust, [in which,] thanks to economic policies ruthlessly enforced by Britain, between 30 and 35 million Indians needlessly died of starvation . . . [while] millions of tonnes of wheat were exported from India to Britain even as famine raged."[21] When some Englishmen of conscience objected and mounted relief operations of their own, the British government threatened them with imprisonment.

After invading Syria in 1920, the French twice bombarded Damascus to subdue the natives who had tried to show that, as Article 22 of the Covenant of the League of Nations had specified, they in fact

were “able to stand by themselves under the strenuous conditions of the modern world.” That was a more polite version of “the White Man’s burden,” the “sacred trust of civilization.” Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Belgium all endorsed the words but violated them in deeds.

The European thrusts into the Muslim world were nearly continuous.[22] Except in the Philippines, these were not American wars, but the American role in the slave trade that brought millions of Africans to the Western Hemisphere is now being reevaluated. No one knows much about the enslaved peoples of Africa, but certainly a significant portion of them were Muslims. And in the Philippines, in half a century of war against the Muslims, as Stephen Kinzer has written, America joined the already established imperial powers.[23]

Hardly a conversation passes almost anywhere in Africa or Asia without reference to northern imperialism. As one young man who had studied business at an American university put it to me, “The bottom line is that no Muslim ever tried to enslave or slaughter your people. You might think of the attack on the World Trade Center, 9/11, as a counterattack. It was terrible and most of us are ashamed of it, but just remember—it killed about 25 hundred people whereas imperialists killed at least 25 million of our relatives and tried to destroy our way of life and our religion. Do you care about that?”

Rudyard Kipling summed up the feeling of imperialists in his poem “The White Man’s Burden”: They did not seek to rule the blacks and browns but only to civilize and uplift them. This drawing shows the very different view held by the people of the South, who saw the white man as their burden.

Collectively these and other events constitute a holocaust as formative to Muslim action as the German Holocaust has been to Jewish action. The scars still have not healed in many societies. We see their legacy in the fragility of civic organizations, the corruption of governments, and the ugliness of violence.

Even if we, as northerners, choose to ignore this history, the victims’ descendants will not. Muslims, like Jews, increasingly probe into and publicize their holocaust. The “deep past” already plays a significant role in the growth of Muslim sentiment toward the Christian North. It will play an important role in international affairs far into the future.[24] Memory of it accounts at least in part for the growth of Muslim hostility today in such movements as the Muslim Brotherhood, the Taliban, al-Qaida, various movements of Salafiyah, and more recently the Islamic State.[25]

Imperialism, and the humiliation and massacres it brought, remains vivid to the victims. This memory, which of course we do not share, inflames Muslim hostility to the West.

I turn now to examine how Muslims tried to recapture what they remember of their glory days, regain their self-respect, and expel the foreign invaders.

PART TWO

The Responses of Traditional Muslim Societies

The societies that composed the Muslim world experienced similar threats to their existence and most reacted in similar ways, but they rarely shared their experiences. Each society perceived the threat as coming from a particular foreign power and reacted in its own ways. While there was a sense of a "Muslim world" and a name for it, *Dar al-Islam,*[1] Muslims did not at first perceive relationships among the resistance movements. As I will point out, the sense of linkage grew to become one of the key elements in the turmoil of our times.

I begin with the attempt by Sultan Selim III to give the Ottoman Empire the means to protect itself against Russian imperialism. I then turn to the invasion of Egypt by Napoleon. Next I describe how the Albanian adventurer Mehmet Ali used Egypt as a base to undertake a program of imperialism on his own. Both Selim and Mehmet Ali sought to copy the North. Most of the other leaders of the South in the nineteenth century fought the North in guerrilla wars. This was true in Algeria, Chechnya, Sudan, Morocco, and Indonesia. I also discuss the way the North invaded the South silently but with as profound an economic and financial effect as if it had been with armies.

Finally, I discuss what motivated those who resisted and what they were trying to defend, as articulated by the Iranian intellectual revolutionary Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and the Egyptian Muhammad Abduh at the end of the turbulent nineteenth century.

CHAPTER 6

Sultan Selim III, Napoleon, and Mehmet Ali

Tsar Ivan the Terrible set Russia on the path of imperialism when, on October 2, 1552, his army stormed the great Tatar city of Kazan. He also set the pattern for future encounters. He slaughtered the defenders, expelled the civilian population and replaced it with Russian settlers, and tore down mosques or converted them into churches. Just four years later, he took over the Turko-Mongol city of Astrakhan to give Muscovy control of the Volga River trade route to the Caspian.

Ivan's successors followed the trail he had blazed. A century and a half later, in 1722, Peter the Great stormed into the Caspian, and Tsarina Anne began the move toward the Crimea when her forces took Azov in 1736. In a series of engagements between 1768 and 1774, Catherine the Great humiliated the Ottoman Empire and its ally the Crimean Tatar khanate. For the first time Russian troops also raided the Caucasus and captured ports on the Black Sea. The treaty ending the war, signed at Küçük Kainarji in 1774, actually was used by Russia as a license to seize still more Ottoman territory, and it gave the Russians the right to build a church in the foreign quarter of Istanbul. In 1783 Russia annexed the Crimea, which was then an Ottoman dependency. As Ivan the Terrible had done two centuries earlier, the Russians massacred the population of captured cities.

Wars with Russia demonstrated the military weakness of the Ottoman Empire. The regular army was routed in key battles, the navy was largely destroyed in a classical attack by fire ships, and the elite janissary corps, while generally fighting bravely, lost its morale and its sense of duty to the empire. Those losses turned out to be the most important results of the war. Putting aside the vaunted military reputation they enjoyed since their foundation four centuries before, the janissaries transformed themselves into a commercial organization. Instead of defending the state, they devoted their efforts

to robbing it. Whereas they had acted as a converter of foreigners into loyal soldiers, they now lobbied to get their children enrolled in the corps (and so drawing salaries and benefits for them and escaping taxes). Men who previously would have been soldiers became craftsmen and merchants. Their aims narrowed to protecting their commercial interests.

When the sultans tried to use them as soldiers, they often revolted. They allied themselves with the Bektash order of Sufis, whose members had traditionally served with army units, acting in religious affairs like the later Soviet commissars acted in political affairs. Their aim was to keep the empire on the straight and narrow path of orthodoxy. But in the changed circumstances of the empire, the alliance of the janissaries and the religious establishment (*ulamah*) inflamed the split between the religious establishment, which was intent on preventing innovation, and the sultanate, which recognized the need for change. This split between *din wa dunya*—religion and worldly affairs—proved as debilitating to the empire as foreign invasion.

This was the situation when Selim III became sultan in 1789.

Like a number of the Ottoman sultans—he was the twenty-eighth in the line—Selim was the son of a Christian mother who had converted to Islam. He was in the prime of his life at twenty-seven when he became sultan, but he inherited an empire that was not in the prime of its life. The government was in disarray, the treasury was bankrupt, the army had been defeated, and the capital was under siege by a Russian army. A cultured man, Selim spoke and read at least three languages, was a noted poet, and excelled in the highly esteemed art of calligraphy; he was obviously deeply religious and, although the term had not yet come into use, proved himself to be a dedicated patriot. These virtues, he soon realized, were of no benefit in his predicament.

He also realized that to survive, the Ottoman state needed to change. Deliberately he fixed on the word “new” (*jadid*).[1] The word itself was crucial. It was anathema to the religious establishment. Among them, it equated to heresy. To change from the traditional to the new meant to give up the Sunnah, which was believed to be eternal. Possibly Selim chose the word to shock the ulamah. It did. But apparently he thought that the pattern of defeats, the massacres of Ottoman subjects by the Russian forces, and the threats to the Ottoman capital gave him an opportunity to overcome clerical opposition and carry out a radical transformation. With an energy and determination unprecedented in modern Ottoman history, Selim rushed to effect his reforms. He began with the army.

He made an initial attempt to reform the thoroughly corrupt and

incompetent janissary corps, but he was thwarted at every step. He wanted to allocate state funds to buy equipment and hire soldiers, but he found that he had no money. He saw that the proceeds of taxes were stolen before they reached the treasury or were purloined there. Every branch of the state must have seemed rotten. So he finally decided to create a wholly new organization (Ottoman Turkish: *nizam-i jadid*). In effect he determined to re-create the Ottoman state or, if that proved impossible, to create a parallel state structure.

Both to protect Ottoman territory and to defend the regime from internal forces, he decided to bypass the army and the janissary corps to form an entirely new—and Western-type—army. To do that, he needed help.

The British and French lent Selim officers to train his new soldiers, though their intention was not to help the Ottomans but rather to keep the Russians from advancing toward the South and threatening their own interests. That was a crucial first step. But Selim realized that he could not depend on European sources of supply for arms and other equipment, since Britain and France might reach an accord with Russia and stop helping him. Prudence required him to galvanize domestic resources, but he had very little to work with. He had scant hope of reforming the state treasury, so, as he did with his new army, he created a parallel treasury with separate sources of finance. With what he could get, mainly from fines and confiscations, he began to open schools to train technicians and craftsmen and to set up arsenals for them to produce what the army needed.

His program made sense, but vested interests had reached such a level that he could not prevail. His enemies decided to strike before his efforts could take effect. The army he was creating was still small, poorly trained, and ill equipped. His new treasury had trampled on too many powerful officials and merchants. Meanwhile, revolts were breaking out in other parts of the empire. The Balkans were in turmoil; warlords controlled most of the rural areas; in Iraq and Syria Ottoman officials had turned themselves into independent rulers; the Wahhabi movement had already taken over most of Arabia; North Africa was hardly even in contact with the capital; and the Russians were pressing down all along the Black Sea. These events cut off sources of funds and exhausted Selim's resources, but it was the French invasion of Egypt that truly compelled action. On September 2, 1798, Selim declared a holy war (jihad) against the French. It could only be a symbolic gesture, and trying to give it substance—as he tried to do—only added to his woes.

Already in the early eighteenth century, the advisers of King Louis XIV recognized the potential value of Egypt to the French kingdom. They knew that in the time of the Roman Empire the country had been a major source of wheat, which France badly needed, and they thought that it might again become France's farm.

For generations, Egypt had been the linchpin connecting the Mediterranean to the Red Sea on the spice route to India. Its role had lapsed when the Portuguese rounded the tip of Africa. That new route served them well, but it did not serve the French well because of the danger of the British fleet. Since about 1668, the French had thrust deeply into India, first through their East India Company and then more directly, but their success was at best intermittent. As they perceived it, the major problems they faced were British and Dutch naval forces. The Egyptian route might enable them to bypass those forces. So, they thought that if the land route could be reestablished and the oppressive tax collectors and thieving officials turned out, they could reap the reward of their efforts. The policy was never satisfactorily effected, but the idea remained exciting.

After the French Revolution, Napoleon picked up the idea. Conquering India was just the sort of combination of romance and strategy that fit his character, and whatever its present condition, Egypt inflamed his imagination. The two fit together: Egypt was the necessary way station on the route to India, and it was the stuff of legend. Conquering it would place him alongside Alexander the Great, Pompey, Julius Caesar, and Mark Antony. Cleopatra was already the queen of romance, obelisks were popping up all over Europe, and the drawing rooms of the rich were filled with copies of Egyptian antiquities. At least in daydreams, Egypt was where the classical world came alive. So caught up in this fantasy was Napoleon that he floated through the Mediterranean being entertained (and perhaps informed) by 150 of France's best and brightest scholars. Then, on July 1, 1798, he disembarked some thirty-eight thousand soldiers from an armada of 280 ships just down the coast from glorious (ancient) and decrepit (contemporary) Alexandria.

Prepared as he was by his assembled scholars to understand ancient Egypt, he must have been astonished by the sight of the actual Egypt. Among the ruins of the past—many of which were buried under drifts of sand—contemporary Egyptians appeared poor descendants of the glorious past.[2] He must have compared them to similarly downtrodden peasants of prerevolutionary France. So it was that in one of his early acts he sought to reinvigorate the Egyptians as the Revolution had invigorated the French. The way to do this was to convey to them the ideas of the Revolution—but in the context of Islam. He proclaimed,

> People of Egypt, you are told that I come to destroy your religion. Do not believe it. Reply that I come to restore your rights. . . . [All Egyptians] are called upon to fill all the posts [of government]; the wisest, best educated and most virtuous will govern and the people will be happy.[3]

Centuries of rule by the Mamluks had deafened Egyptians to such talk. They did not think of themselves as candidates to fill the posts of government. Egyptians were to plow and reap; Turks were to make war and govern. In the contemporary expression, Turks were shepherds and Egyptians were their sheep.

So, in the short time he stayed in Egypt, Napoleon employed three tactics. The first was to remove the martial pretentions of the "Turks." In an hour-long engagement on July 21 near the pyramids, his artillery gunned down the gloriously festooned Mamluk medieval cavalry. Those who survived would never again seriously challenge the French army. Nor could the Ottoman sultan to whose empire the governorate (*pashaluk*) of Egypt belonged. Selim declared jihad against the French just a month after they landed, and, with the help of the British fleet, he put ashore about twenty thousand troops in Egypt a year later. They were annihilated by the French army. A subsequent attack the following year was also repulsed with great loss to the Ottomans. Sultan Selim would be ruined by his brave efforts.

The second tactic Napoleon employed was to try to "win the hearts and minds" of the conquered Egyptians. He enforced tight discipline on his soldiers (at least in Cairo), got them to pay cash for everything they took from the natives, cast himself as a sponsor of their religious and national festivals, and encouraged the people to proclaim the rights of mankind as the Revolution had proclaimed them. Above all, that meant participating in government.

As soon as he could, Napoleon created assemblies (*diwans*) as pro forma governing councils. Drawing their members largely from the religious establishment, Napoleon said that he expected them to serve as examples of the structure he wanted to create, but he limited their authority and had their discussions monitored by French officers. We have no way of knowing how they felt, but it probably appeared to the contemporary Egyptians that their real task was to keep order and front for the French authorities.

Napoleon also tried, as imperialists usually did, to divide his opponents. Repeatedly he acted against the Mamluks while proclaiming his support for the Egyptian people. It was the greedy Mamluks, he said, who had caused the ruin of Egypt, which had once been a land of "great cities, wide canals and extensive commerce." [4] More subtly he exploited the weakness of contemporary Egyptian society—the division between the Muslims and the Coptic Christians. Like others before him, he promoted the interests and pride of the

Copts and used them as tax collectors. With French backing, at least as the Egyptian chronicler of the time Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti saw it, the Copts "went into the country like rulers, wreaking havoc among the Muslims with arrests, beatings, insults, and ceaseless harassment in their demands for money."[5] As Napoleon must have expected, the Muslims regarded the Copts as turncoats and hated them; this had the effect of forcing them, for their own protection, further into the service of the French. For that they were later to pay a painful price, but in the short run Napoleon acquired a capable native population that would not work against him. In this tactic, he followed the Portuguese before him and would be followed by the British, Dutch, and other French governments after him.

Napoleon's third tactic was to overawe the Egyptians with his army. No matter how soft the glove worn by French imperialism, it covered sharp claws. Like British India, Dutch Indonesia, Russian Caucasus, and Chinese Central Asia, French Egypt was ultimately a military dictatorship. No resistance, even if just whispered, could be tolerated if imperialism was to work.

Egypt's leaders were ordered to dress in French colors, the people were to wear the cockade of the French Revolution, and villagers were to "hoist the French flag and also the flag of our friend the Ottoman Sultan." [6] Those villages that resisted or refused to meet demands for supplies were to be burned down. Enough were destroyed to cow the rest.

The French, however, always emphasized their civilizing mission, their *mission civilisatrice.* They truly believed and wanted everyone else to believe that their aim was to achieve a refined notion of what Rudyard Kipling would later call the white man's burden; so the glove that covered the claws had to be attractive. The means were at hand: Napoleon's shipboard tutors, grandly renamed La Commission des Sciences et Arts, were put to work governing the country, and to make sure that they did in the most modern way, he created l'Institut d'Égypte, whose scholars were assigned to divisions dealing with mathematics, physics, political economy, and literature and the arts.

Very grand was the mandate of l'Institut d'Égypte. Its members speculated on the nature of mirages, translated the Quran into French verse, studied ancient ruins, made astronomical observations, analyzed the composition of desert sands, and tried to understand the diseases that afflicted Egyptians. They seem to have been allowed to study anything that caught their fancy. Over the longer term, they produced a magnificent series of volumes with copperplate engravings of ancient and modern Egypt, the *Description de l'Égypte.*[7]

The French also set up the first printing press in Egypt, for government statements and propaganda. Its publications were mainly

in French and so not easily available even to the Egyptian elite. They also put out a French-language newspaper, *Courrier d'Égypte,* which at least a few Egyptians learned to read to one another as they gathered in coffee houses. The French also opened a library where Egyptians were able to peruse maps and charts. The chronicler al-Jabarti reports that he often visited it. It was the ancestor of organizations like Alliance Française, the British Council, and the United States Information Agency.

However attractive it was, the French library reached a small audience. At the level of daily intercourse, the French and the Egyptians regarded one another as barbarians. That indeed is the fundamental flaw of imperialism: it throws together people of different tastes, conventions, and deportment in a context of inequality defined by actual or potential violence.

The Egyptian people were not blinded by French goodwill and soon had cause to fight them. Raiding parties of soldiers descended on villages that were suspected of anti-French activities. They meted out punishments, often burning the straw stored on roofs, thus caving them in, and looted the villagers' stored food. This program was an early example of counterinsurgency, and it was aimed not only at punishment but also at preventing the supply of food to the remaining Mamluk, Ottoman, and bedouin forces. In one reported case French soldiers utterly destroyed a town of about twelve thousand people.

As the French observer Vivant Denon wrote, villagers were lucky if only a "few of their wives and daughters" were raped.[8] In at least one town, Beni Adi, the villagers were not so fortunate. The French soldiers seized the women and passed them from hand to hand. Denon commented that the unfortunate women were "reinstated in their domestic relations without any questions being asked. A conduct so little consonant to the usual habits of Mahomedan jealousy, inducing us to express our surprise, we were answered very sensibly, 'what fault of theirs is it that we have not been able to defend them.' "[9] What Denon and the French rulers perhaps failed to understand was the depth of the shame incurred by the Egyptian men.

The French developed cadres of men who gathered information on the Egyptians, but their intelligence agents did not provide understanding of the Egyptians. The French believed, as one of their generals put it, that "the inhabitants were to be won by their [the French] affections, and civilised. Bonaparte rapidly seized the system fit for these purposes."[10] The Egyptians did not find the French system fit their way of life. Nor was the intelligence service able to anticipate Egyptian reactions. Thus, on October 21–22, 1798, the very people Napoleon thought he was uplifting to the heights of French culture and freedom, the native Muslim, Arabic-speaking Egyptians, who had

so long accepted Mamluk rule, revolted. Their aim was quite simply to throw the French out of Egypt.

The divisions between the French and the Egyptians were typical of imperialism as it had been practiced even in the times of the Crusades and would be practiced in later times in Africa and Asia. Napoleon's troops continued to fill roles and perceptions that dated to the Crusades: the invaders from the North found the people of the South to be dirty and ignorant, and the people of the South echoed their feelings.[11]

The contemporary Egyptian observer of Napoleon's Frenchmen, al-Jabarti, also regarded them as physically dirty, due to what he thought were disgusting personal habits. He was probably speaking for most Egyptians when he expressed revulsion for the French custom of entering houses and treading on beautiful carpets while wearing shoes soiled by the filth of the streets. Worse was that "among their repulsive habits also is their practice of spitting and blowing their noses upon the furnishings." And more shocking still was the lack of hygiene as demanded in Islam:

> Whenever a Frenchman has to defecate he does so wherever he happens to be, even in full view of people, and he goes away as he is, without washing his private parts after defecation. If he is a man of taste and refinement he wipes himself with whatever he finds, even a paper with writing on it, otherwise he remains as he is.[12]

Simple matters of hygiene were carried forward into a variety of other customs. Covering the hair was one. Muslims, like Jews, wore caps. Muslims were expected to shave their pubic hair, men were to shave their heads, and women were expected to wear veils when appearing in public. The French followed different customs in each of these areas, so each regarded the other as at least improper and in some cases as illegal.

Taste also reached into other personal matters. Napoleon was in need of female companionship, so he had his staff round up some Egyptian women for him—we are not told how, but obviously they could not refuse the invitation. He did not fancy them; Egyptian ideas of beauty were different from European ones. So he sent them away and summoned to his bed the wife of an officer on his staff. She was, in his terms, beautiful, venturesome, and sexy. From the Muslims' perspective, he committed the crime of adultery. He got rid of her husband by sending him on a mission to France.[13]

Whether or not the Egyptians knew of Napoleon's affair, they certainly knew of the actions of the French soldiers. As al-Jabarti reports it, French soldiers spent much of their time looting and raping. But when it came to slaughter, they were extremely competent. He

gives them full credit and even writes that they "acted as if they were following the traditions of the Community (of Muhammad) in early Islam and saw themselves as fighters in a holy war."[14] But their very virtue, al-Jabarti felt, served only to make them more dangerous and gave more reason to expel them as quickly as possible.

Napoleon thought that the mission civilisatrice was integral to his rule, but he was also a practical man who knew that armies march on their stomachs, so the first questions he posed to the members of his academy were, Could bakeries be improved to give the army acceptable bread? Does Egypt produce a substitute for hops in brewing beer? How can the waters of the Nile be clarified? In the current state of Cairo, would it be preferable to build a water-driven or a wind-powered mill? How can gunpowder be manufactured from such resources as Egypt has? These questions showed a truly revolutionary approach to government: it was to take up the issue of change. Even more startling was the sixth question Napoleon posed: "What is the status of civil and criminal law and what sort of improvements are possible and desired by the people of the country?"[15]

Grand objective, Napoleon must have thought of his sixth question, but to the extent they knew of it, the Muslims would have seen it as the promotion of heresy. To change the law given by God was to commit an evil act. It was the very cast of mind that impelled Selim III's innovations in the nizam-i jadid, and the conservative reaction to them would cause him to be assassinated.

Thus, we can see multiple causes for a violent rejection by the Egyptians of the French. It happened on October 21–22, 1798, when the people of Cairo rose in revolt. As far as we can tell, the revolt was spontaneous. Cairo's traditional leaders opposed it. Bands of common people found leaders where none had previously been recognized. One who was identified—and there must have been many who were not—was a maker of perfumes. Some of those who listened were motivated by hatred of the foreigners, while others were apparently interested only in looting. But enough were sincere that, despite being almost completely without firearms, they faced down disciplined units of the French army, arming themselves with stones and staves. Significantly, the resistance centered on the Azhar University mosque, itself the emotional symbol of Egyptian Islam.

Perhaps it was precisely to punish them in the most emotional way possible that, as al-Jabarti said,

> the French trod in the Mosque of al-Azhar with their shoes, carrying swords and rifles. Then they scattered in its courtyard and its main praying area (*maqsura*) and tied their horses to the *qibla* [the target of prayer]. They treated the books and Quranic volumes as trash, throwing them on the

ground, stamping on them with their feet and shoes. Furthermore they soiled the mosque, blowing their spit in it, pissing, and shitting in it.[16]

The revolt was suppressed, but the image of France as the agent of the mission civilisatrice was sullied. The division between conqueror and conquered was sharpened. Frenchmen feared to go into the streets unarmed and individually. And their leaders forced the Egyptians out of one of their quarters of Cairo and turned it into a French-only neighborhood. In that policy, as we shall see, the British in India followed them.

Perhaps disillusioned by the poor results of that mission, Napoleon then turned his formidable energies toward extending the launching pad for his planned move toward India. That too failed when an outbreak of plague and the intervention of the British fleet stopped his troops from taking the fortress of Acre in Palestine. He retreated to Egypt and gave up the plan to follow Alexander the Great to India. He sailed back to France on August 23, 1799. Two years later, what remained of the French forces (and a number of Egyptian collaborators) followed him.

Napoleon's invasion marked a turning point in the European view of the Middle East. It firmly planted an awareness of the threat to India in the British mind. Fear of invasion remained there as threats were perceived from Russia, France, Germany, and the Ottoman Empire for the next century and a half. It challenged later French governments, the German kaiser, and the Russian tsars to find compelling national "interests" where they had previously perceived none. And it also served as an exemplar and emotional prod to one of the most important leaders of resistance to imperialism, Mehmet Ali Pasha.

Mehmet Ali was an Albanian, born in 1769, the same year as Napoleon, in the Macedonian port of Kavalla. Like Napoleon, he was a foreigner in the country he was to make his own; like Napoleon, he was to win and lose a vast empire; and, like Napoleon, he was a superb opportunist. Seeing long before most others in the Muslim world what he thought was the source of French power, he spent his life trying to acquire the organization, the military force, and the industrial capacity that he thought had made Napoleon effective. What he never realized was the importance of the emotional drive of revolutionary France. Indeed, he never thought of Egypt in the terms that Napoleon's generation thought of France. For Mehmet Ali, Egypt was a base, and his energies were directed toward keeping it his.

The Egypt that had come about after the French withdrawal was in

a state of chaos. The Ottoman government had sent a Turkish official to take power. They could not give him much support, so he hit on the idea of enrolling a Nubian or Sudanese force. And, having watched from a distance Napoleon's military machine, he tried to copy it, dressing his troops in French uniforms and having them drilled by French officers in the French style. Mehmet Ali would learn from his example. Meanwhile, the Mamluks, whom the French had driven away but not completely destroyed, regrouped and also began to copy the French army. The third contender for power in Egypt, Mehmet Ali, worked with the bits and pieces left over by these two contenders and played them against one another. In 1805, just about six years after Napoleon had sailed away, Mehmet Ali managed to outwit his rivals and seize power.

Mehmet Ali Pasha, an Albanian Muslim, mounted the first large-scale revolt against the British imperialists in the Muslim world. *Source:* Bibliotheca Alexandrina's Memory of Modern Egypt Digital Archive.

The distant Ottoman sultans were accustomed to such acts and generally accepted them in return for the payment of bribes and the proclamation of loyalty to the sultan. But what Mehmet Ali did next was a move out of Napoleon's playbook. He got his seizure of power

recognized locally by the Egyptian notables.

The British, having decided to make sure that the French were firmly pushed out of Egypt, also followed Napoleon's lead by invading the country in 1807. They proved far less capable than the French and were defeated in a series of running battles. In these campaigns, Mehmet Ali played a shrewd game, using the British against his rivals and using fellow Albanian mercenaries against them all. The British gave up and surrendered Alexandria.

The external threat to Mehmet Ali was temporarily ended, but, like Selim III, he realized that to survive he would have to destroy the only group that could challenge him. For Selim, it had been the janissaries; for Mehmet Ali, it was the remaining Mamluks. Selim failed to curb or kill the janissaries, and they assassinated him in 1807. Mehmet Ali learned the lesson: he managed to ambush and destroy the Mamluk leadership four years later on March 1, 1811.

Also like Selim, Mehmet Ali realized that in the long run he would have to build a modern army and back it up with a means to supply it with modern weapons. His answer was essentially the same as Selim's, a new order. Adoption of this program did not require much innovation: it was already being implemented by the Ottoman governor in Egypt and by the Mamluks. And, by luck, just at the opportune moment, a former French army officer arrived to offer to train the would-be soldiers. Captain Joseph Sève, who had fought for Napoleon in the Battle of Waterloo, was the first of many foreign officers (including a number of Americans after the Civil War) who would serve in the Egyptian army. Like the *renegados* who served in the contemporary Algerian navy, Sève converted to Islam.

At first, the cadets training under Sève (who had become known as Sulaiman Pasha) were Turks. Not able to find enough of them, Sève began to recruit Sudanese; then, for the first time in centuries, Egyptian peasants were enrolled as soldiers. As Mehmet Ali engaged in wars against the Wahhabis of Arabia, the Greeks, and the Ottomans, the conservative opposition in the army was killed off. Mehmet Ali had solved the problem Selim III had confronted by attrition.

During the course of his reign, the army grew to an unprecedented size. By 1833 it had reached about 190,000 men and incorporated or involved nearly one in ten Egyptians. Nothing like those developments had ever before occurred in Egypt.

Mehmet Ali dressed his troops in the European style, but he realized that doing so was only symbolic and that, to be of any use, the soldiers would have to be trained on a European standard. With Sève's guidance, he opened academies to train troops. That was a start.

But it was the genius of Mehmet Ali that he recognized that military power was not simply a matter of numbers, drills, or the style of uniforms; peasant farmers had to be trained to become soldiers or to be turned into industrial workers to produce guns, ammunition, and uniforms. In effect, he was forced to create on an Egyptian scale, and, as far as it could be done, by orders from the top, something like the contemporary European Industrial Revolution. He set out to do these things by sending the first Egyptian trainee to Europe in 1809.

Although he apparently had not intended to do so, Mehmet Ali created a new generation that was to come to the fore in Egypt after his death. (I will discuss the most famous of them in Chapter 16.)

To pay for his new order, Mehmet Ali realized that he had to centralize agricultural, financial, industrial, and commercial control just as he had centralized military and political control. Essentially he established a monopoly state in about 1816. A leader in his domestic efforts was textile production. To produce cotton textiles he opened some thirty factories between 1818 and 1828. By roughly 1830, the number of workers in these mills had reached about thirty thousand. Taken as a whole, the number of industrial workers—a category of workers that hardly existed when he took power—ultimately reached at least four hundred thousand. Anyone wishing to buy the Egyptian products or raw cotton had to deal with the state. This put him in opposition to the British, who were determined to open markets for their products and so regarded monopolies and areas closed to free trade as unacceptable to the world—for "world," read "British"—order. As they were doing at the same time in India, the British would force Egypt to "deindustrialize."

Also unacceptable to Britain were actions that endangered the barrier to the advance of Russia. That barrier was the Ottoman Empire. To Mehmet Ali, who was imbued by some of the ambition of Napoleon, expansion was necessary. His domestic accomplishments were not ends but means. His "India" was the Ottoman Empire. So, with or without leave from the sultan, he sent his forces into Arabia in 1811, the Sudan in 1820, and Greece in 1827. In 1831, he saw an opportunity to expand his realm still farther. His military forces, he believed, had reached a level of proficiency unmatched in the Middle East or even by the British, who he knew were the main upholders of the Ottoman Empire. The moment seemed opportune. Britain was distracted with other issues, the French were engaged in the Algerian revolt, and Russia was hostile to the Ottomans. And the Ottomans themselves were burdened with indemnities, had almost no navy left, and had only a tired and poorly equipped army. So Mehmet Ali turned himself into a sort of imperialist. He sent his army into the Levant and ordered it to begin its march toward the Ottoman capital. His army

defeated the Ottoman army in the Battle of Konya in 1832 and could have taken Constantinople (modern Istanbul), but, fearing European intervention, he stopped. However, the ruling sultan, Mahmoud II, was so frightened that he asked for Russian intervention.

This in turn frightened the British and French so much that they forced Mehmet Ali to pull back from Anatolia. Negotiations failed to produce an agreement to stop him. Mehmet Ali misread the signal and failed to see the danger; he thought he could profit from Anglo-French disagreement, so in 1838 he informed them that he would declare Egypt independent of the Ottoman Empire.

Encouraged by Britain, the sultan decided to attack the Egyptian army. Encouragement was not enough: the Egyptians destroyed the Ottoman army at the Battle of Nezib in 1839 and, sensing the collapse of the empire, the Ottoman fleet defected to Egypt. Mehmet Ali then overplayed his hand and the British blockaded Egypt and shelled Egyptian-held Beirut while their army did what Napoleon had failed to do: they took the strategic fortress of Acre.

It is difficult to say what might have happened in the Middle East had Mehmet Ali's venture into imperialism continued. He was stopped at the height of his powers, after a series of campaigns that had taken his armies up the Nile to conquer the Sudan, into Europe to attempt to retain Greece in the Ottoman Empire, and into Asia, where they had conquered Arabia, Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, and half of Anatolia. The Ottoman fleet defected to him. He was on the march toward empire.

It was not to be. Britain and France decided to stop him with force if necessary.

Moreover, industrial England was actively seeking markets and believed that the monopoly system Mehmet Ali had put into practice in Egypt might be extended to Syria and the rest of the Middle East and so stifle British commerce. They forced the Ottoman government to accept a commercial code guaranteeing free trade in 1838 and tried to force Mehmet Ali to accept it and dismantle his monopolies in Egypt. He refused. So the British landed troops in Beirut and forced Egypt to reduce its army from 130,000 to 18,000 men. With the reason for his modernization program voided, he lost interest in the sweeping changes he had set in motion.

Ill and senile, Mehmet Ali died in 1849.

CHAPTER 7

French Invasion and Algerian Resistance

Like most Middle Eastern and African countries, “Algeria” was an imprecise concept. The Arabic name for Algeria recognizes this by using the plural: *al-jazair* means “the islands,” by which was meant inhabited places in sea or sand. The largest “island” was an extension of the principal city, Algiers.

The peoples of the vast interior beyond the Atlas Mountains—the range stretching along the northwest edge of Africa from Morocco to Tunisia—were mainly Berbers (Tuwareg), either villagers living in scattered oases or nomadic tribesmen. Known as Numidians to the Romans, they had long ago adopted Islam and the Arabic language. City people rarely entered the interior, so the tribal areas and oases were virtually separate countries, autonomous but linked to the others by a vigorous practice of Islam. Sufism was the popular form of religion, and the many tombs of saints were the objects of widespread pilgrimage. The villagers and nomads were also linked by the trade in animal products and grain crops to the coastal cities.

In the eighteenth century, the city of Algiers had a population of about 120,000. Like the peoples of the interior, the inhabitants were divided into groups, but these divisions were determined more by custom than by geography. Most were native Muslims, but about 16,000 were converts to Islam—renegados, as defectors from Europe and England were called. On land, the Europeans engaged in shipbuilding and trade in shipborne commerce. At sea, they made up a significant portion of the merchant and corsair ship crews. That fleet was the “industry” of Algiers.

The vast majority of the inhabitants were Berbers; virtually all had converted to Islam during the eighth century CE. The Arab population was mostly composed of descendants of Spanish Muslims (Moriscos) who, like the Sephardic Jews, had crossed into North Africa after being expelled from Spain in 1492.[1] Unlike the stern Christians of Castile and Aragon, the Muslims of the North African city-states

welcomed Jews. By the nineteenth century the thriving Jewish community of Algiers was nearly as numerous as the Christian renegados. Finally, following the absorption of Algeria into the Ottoman Empire in 1518, a steady stream of Turks arrived as soldiers and administrators.

Compared to contemporary Europe, Algiers was a cosmopolitan society. Islam "pervaded every aspect of existence for the Algerine people from birth to death."[2] But unlike the southern European states, which generally persecuted or expelled not only Muslims and Jews but also Protestant Christians, Algerian rulers, in the traditional Islamic pattern, generally allowed each minority to practice its own religion and follow its own customs. It would have astonished the leaders of the Inquisition had they known that Christian prisoners were even allowed to have a church in their jail.

Within the restraints of its small and scattered population and limited resources, Algeria made itself an important country in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. It did so primarily by turning to the sea. In the long wars with Spain, France, and England, its navy did exactly what the fleets of those countries did—it engaged in a mixture of trade and privateering. Today, we would likely think of both the European and the North African countries as rogue states and their sailors as terrorists. But that was not how contemporaries regarded one another. They engaged in what amounted to a cold war, with occasional fighting interspersed with long periods of mutually profitable commerce.

A part of this commerce was not mutually profitable, however. The Algerians, both Muslims and renegados, preyed on European merchant shipping and populated areas. Unlike the pirates in the Caribbean, who darted out from shallow bays on small boats, the Barbary pirates often operated in large fleets and ranged as far as Iceland. Their principal aim was to capture people whom they could sell into slavery. All along Europe's Mediterranean coast, small villages stationed watchmen on the heights to light warning fires if they spotted suspicious sails. If the watchmen fell asleep or drank too much and the villagers did not have time to flee into the walled towns, pirates would cordon off an area and seize the entire population. Over the 250 years the pirates were most active, they are estimated to have kidnapped perhaps as many as roughly 1.25 million people. So common was this practice that it was regularized in treaties with a stated system for recycling cargoes and ransoming prisoners. But thousands of the captives remained in Algiers and converted to Islam; some even entered the government of the city-state.

The administration of Algiers was much like that of contemporary Venice and other European city-states, except that the elite consisted

of Ottoman Turks. Europeans thought of Algiers as “a turbulent state, forever on the brink of anarchy and rebellion [but] the fact is that during the Regency’s [the local government’s] three centuries of existence there was not a single large-scale revolt against the central authority.”[3] The hand of the Turks generally rested lightly on the population. It was restrained by the merchants, who had to be given security against rapacious soldiers because they created the prosperity that European visitors found so evident.

Napoleon considered its prosperity important. During his voyage from France in 1798, he arranged to buy grain, then one of Algiers’s major exports, for the thirty-eight thousand men he was taking to Egypt. The Algerians were happy to supply it, but they were less happy when Napoleon defaulted on payment. His failure to pay began years of legal and diplomatic negotiations, at the end of which, in 1827, the exasperated ruler, furious that he had been swindled, lost his temper, flicked the resident French consul with his fly whisk, and allegedly called him “a wicked, faithless, idol-worshipping rascal.” [4] When the incident was reported to the French government, it demanded a particularly humiliating form of apology, which the Algerian ruler refused, saying to another European consul, “I’m surprised that the French haven’t asked for my wife as well.”[5]

Then, threatening dire punishment but doing little, the French resorted to what we today call sanctions: they blockaded the port of Algiers. Two years passed during which an unpopular French government tried to whip up domestic anger and support for “revenge.” The French public was not much interested, but the government mobilized its forces anyway. It attacked in 1830, proclaiming it a “retaliation.”

The French invasion at first went smoothly. Indeed, it began almost as a gala picnic. Wilfrid Blunt has left us an account of the event: “In the bright sunlight of these May mornings the whole venture wore the aspect of a vast, care-free pageant. Official painters lugged their easels and canvasses on board [the French warships]; representatives of foreign powers, who had joined the expedition to see the fun, strutted about in gay, outlandish uniforms.” [6]

But, as sometimes happen in picnics, the fun was dampened by bad weather. The gaudy ships were forced to retreat to the island of Palma, where half the pride of the French navy became immobilized by engine failure. It was a portent of troubles to come, but no one was in a mood to read the portents. Having made the necessary repairs and taken aboard new troops and well-wishers, the expedition returned to the African coast, where the troops landed with only sporadic opposition. In their first encounter, their superior artillery overwhelmed the Algerians, who lost all their antiquated artillery and

some four thousand men, while only fifty-seven of the French were killed and five hundred wounded. It was a battle typical of nineteenth-century clashes between a militarily superior Europe and traditionally armed Africa. But it did not end the war.

As Blunt wrote of the French in Algeria, and as many would later write of the Americans in Iraq, "A sad disillusionment lay ahead. . . . Rarely had a conquering nation known so little of the peoples, the customs, and even the elementary geography of the land it imagined it had virtually subjugated."[7] When the ruler surrendered, the French proclaimed, in effect, "mission accomplished."

They accepted the surrender of the ruler in a grand ceremony. Generously, they allowed him to go into exile with a small part of his treasury and all of his harem. But other Algerians refused to recognize their defeat. Disturbed, even angry that the fighting continued, the French looted Algiers and began attacks on outlying villages. Each attack tended to galvanize opposition rather than subdue it. The resistance began to take shape as a religious and tribal movement.

The man who led this resistance was one of the most remarkable people of the nineteenth century. In 1832, the twenty-two-year-old Abd al-Qadir issued his call to Algerian tribesmen and villagers to take up arms in the cause of Islam. At first he based his movement in the town of Mascara, whose name in Algerian Arabic meant "the place of soldiers." *Jihadis* from all over Algeria took up such arms as they had —farm implements and the occasional hunting musket—to join him. They could not hold the town. Once driven out, Abd al-Qadir had no option but to turn to guerrilla warfare.

A natural "partisan leader of the foremost rank," as the great English student of colonial warfare Colonel (later Major General) Charles Callwell described him, Abd al-Qadir realized that he could not hope to defeat the French in a mass battle where he would always be outnumbered and outgunned.[8] He had to fight running battles, hitting when he could and running when he risked defeat. He kept up those tactics for the next fifteen years. As Callwell wrote,

> His personal ascendancy over the nomads of the south and over the wild Berber hill-men, enabled him to play the strategist from wherever his wandering abode might be, over a vast extent of country. For years his bold and sudden strokes bewildered the French leaders. He had full information of their slow, deliberate movements. He knew when a garrison was drained of troops and he straightway fell upon it. He cut communications and he swept away convoys. But by the time the French had assembled their forces for a counter-stroke, and had dragged their guns and impedimenta to the spot, the hostile body which had done the mischief had vanished into the desert, or had flown to some hill refuge whither the cumbrous column could not follow it.[9]

Against Abd al-Qadir, the French brought a general, Thomas Bugeaud, who knew guerrilla warfare firsthand, having studied it the hard way. As a young officer in 1808, he was in the first French column to enter Spain and experienced the Spanish *guerrilla.* From Spain, Callwell tells us, Bugeaud "perceived that he had to deal not with a hostile army but with a hostile population, that this population consisted largely of clans and tribes of fixed abode, and that to bring them to reason he must reach through their crops, their flocks, and their property." So he set up "flying columns" whose task was "to chastise the rebels in their homes."[10] He was the first of several ruthless commanders who turned counterinsurgency into a war on the civilian population.

As the French took town after town and cut Abd al-Qadir's forces off from his base of popular support, Abd al-Qadir created a "nation in motion," much as Josip Broz Tito was to do a century later in Yugoslavia. As he told a French general,

> My *smala* [camp, which at times numbered sixty or seventy thousand people] included every kind of craftsman necessary for our organization—armourers, tailors, saddlers and the like. Complete order prevailed. *Kadis* [judges] administered justice, exactly as they did in the towns. Markets were held. There was no stealing, no immorality. Hospitality was offered, as in the past. When we made a halt, the education of our children went on; the times of prayer were observed, and announced by the *muezzins.* Each family carried provisions according to its transport facilities, the rich for two or three months, the poor for at least a fortnight.[11]

Abd al-Qadir fought on, but the French tactics gradually drained the popular support on which his warriors depended, and the frightful suffering caused by Bugeaud's attacks on their villages disheartened even his warriors. Then he was misled by a chance victory at the Battle of Macta on July 26, 1835, into making the classical mistake of resistance leaders: he tried to transform his guerrilla forces into an army. His force, losing its mobility and offering a better target, could not match the French—who numbered over one hundred thousand men, or a third of the whole French army. In a series of desperate evasions and pitched battles, Abd al-Qadir fought and ran in a way that almost perfectly paralleled the furious campaign Tito would wage against the German army a century later. But he lacked Tito's system of control, the ideology that unified his followers, and the ruthlessness to punish defection. One after another, Abd al-Qadir's tribal supporters turned against him, as did his only useful foreign ally, the sultan of Morocco. In 1846, with his army reduced to a remnant, and unwilling to bring further suffering on his people, he surrendered.[12]

Meanwhile, Europeans poured into the country. Within a decade after the French invasion, they amounted to about 1 percent of the

population and were hurriedly taking over the agricultural lands. As in the Philippine and Vietnamese insurgencies, ownership of land was bitterly contested, but the French recognized it as key to winning the war. As General Bugeaud put it, in an address to the French National Assembly, “Wherever there is fresh water and fertile land, we must plant colonists.”[13] Colonialism was seen as the ultimate counterinsurgency: what they could not effect with the rifle, the French thought they could bring about with the plow.

Large areas were confiscated, officially in reprisal for resistance, and the inhabitants were either killed or driven away. As in America during the same period, where rights to Indian lands were being, as the phrase then had it, “extinguished,” there were occasional efforts to slow down or at least regularize the seizure of lands, but these moves were easily circumvented. Area by area, the Algerian population was driven off of virtually all usable agricultural lands.

Although Abd al-Qadir had surrendered, the war continued sporadically under new leaders. One of the most romantic of these was a young Berber woman named Fatma Nat Sid Hmed, known for her village as N’Soumer, who led the resistance with her husband.

N’Soumer was born the year the French invasion began and would die in 1863 when she was only thirty-three years old. Her father was a teacher in a Quranic school, which, although girls were not usually allowed, she insisted on attending. She refused an arranged marriage at sixteen and continued her studies. Sometime later she met Bou Baghia, one of the men who had served in Abd al-Qadir’s army but refused to surrender with him. She apparently fought alongside him until he was killed in action in 1854. At that point the remaining guerrillas in his group turned over leadership to her. When the resistance was overwhelmed in 1857, she went into hiding but was soon captured by the French. She died in prison. In Algerian memory, she is a national hero.[14]

By seizing agricultural lands, draining the country of specie, and employing Catholic missionaries as Christian mujahidin to undercut Islamic beliefs and customs, the French infuriated the Algerians. They also exported the country’s limited food stocks to sell during the Crimean War when prices were unusually high, creating a famine that killed about one in five Berbers.

Some Algerians fought on. In the next generation, in 1871, one of the Berber leaders, Muhammad al-Mukrani, tried to follow the path of Abd al-Qadir and N’Soumer. He built his uprising on a Sufi movement, as other Muslims in Libya, Central Asia, and Java were then doing, but the French counterinsurgency, the famine, the loss of land, and the cultural decline had drained away their spirit. After just a year, the revolt fizzled and the leaders were exiled.

The colonists not only took away the land of the natives but also drove them down culturally. When the French invaded, a large portion of the Algerian population was literate in Arabic, with a satisfactory standard of living—comparable to that of most Europeans—and a coherent cultural life shaped by Islam. But by 1847, Alexis de Tocqueville told his colleagues in the French National Assembly that "we have rendered Muslim society much more miserable and much more barbaric than it was before it became acquainted with us."[15]

Like other imperialist regimes, the French moved to replace Algeria's native languages, Berber and Arabic, with French. They went further: they also moved to reduce the level of literacy. After a century of French rule, about three of every four Algerians were illiterate even in Arabic, few had stable jobs, and almost none had well-paying employment. In effect, they were excluded even from their own culture and the economy that had sustained it.

When I went to Algeria in 1962 in the last days of the Algerian-French war (which I had been trying to help stop on behalf of the American government), I saw the results of this policy. Algerians were so totally excluded from the *colon,* or European, economy that even mom-and-pop laundries and bakeries were European monopolies. Although Algiers had France's largest medical school and hospital complex, fewer than half a dozen doctors in the entire territory were Algerian. There was no foothold for an Algerian in *colon* Algeria. Among the excluded natives, bad health was chronic and many went to bed each night hungry.

Meanwhile, many Algerians sought refuge in Islam. But while Islam offered a unifying code of conduct, it was not able to overcome the ethnic divisions of Arab and Berber, the social divisions of tribes in each ethnic group, or the cultural divide between villagers and city dwellers. These divisions had existed before the French arrived and contributed to Abd al-Qadir's failure to prevent the conquest. In rural areas, peasants and tribesmen thought of their little worlds, their villages, rather than Algeria, as their nation (*watan*). Between rural villagers and townspeople there was little affinity. Islam and the humiliating fact that all were despised by the Europeans gave them a semblance of unity, but, in the eyes of most Algerians, Islam had failed: the French had taken the country.

CHAPTER 8

The British Conquest of India and the Sepoy Revolt

In the eighteenth century, the 180 million people inhabiting the Indian subcontinent composed about a fifth of the world population. Their principal state, the Mughal Empire, was immensely rich and powerful, but as it fell into disrepair, its divisions became politically destructive. Divided among speakers of nearly two hundred languages and more than five hundred dialects, "India" reverted to a collection of mutually hostile states, most of which were also divided internally by religious, ethnic, linguistic, and caste barriers.[1] Ambitious provincial rulers, anxious to increase their wealth, were willing to subvert their increasingly impotent masters and attack their neighbors. The Indian states resembled—though on a far larger scale—the mélange of Arabian bedouin clans encountered by the nascent Muslim state: they were so divided against one another as to have no capacity to defend themselves. That was the India the British encountered when they established their first bridgehead in Bengal at the Battle of Plassey in 1757.[2]

At first, the English were not very many. So, like imperialists everywhere, they used the natives to conquer one another. In eighteenth-century India, both the British and the French had set up native forces in their outposts. The British called theirs *sepoys,* an Anglicized version of the Persian-Turkish word for soldier, *sipahi.* While the British thought of the entire population simply as "natives," each native community considered the others aliens. No fellow feeling united Bengalis to Punjabis, and certainly none tied Muslims to Hindus. The vast majority of the population could not understand the speech of neighbors more than a day's walk away. In short, "India" did not exist as a culture, a society, or a state. Its groups were as alien to one another as they were to the British. It was not hard to recruit them to fight each other.

The British, who had arrived in India as agents of the East India

Company, first used natives just to guard their trading stations, not to conquer territory.[3] However, they soon employed so many guards that when Lieutenant Colonel Robert Clive organized the Battle of Plassey in 1757, he could draw on one thousand Europeans and about three thousand Indians. He probably did not need that many. Plassey was less a military test than a financial transaction: he bribed the Mughal Empire's troops not to fight. As Clive commented afterward, "If they had an inclination to have destroyed the Europeans they might have done it with sticks and stones." But Clive's victory there marked the beginning of British India: as P. J. Marshall wrote in 1987, "To meet the Company's demands, Bengal was dismembered bit by bit until the whole province came under British rule in 1765." [4]

Reflecting on these events in far-off Edinburgh, the great Scottish philosopher Adam Smith shrewdly warned in 1776 that a "company of merchants . . . [is] a profession no doubt extremely respectable, but which in no country in the world carries along with it that sort of authority which naturally over-awes the people, and without force commands their willing obedience. Such a council can command obedience only by the military forces with which they are accompanied, and their government is therefore necessarily military and despotic." Smith continued, "Such exclusive companies, therefore, are nuisances in every respect; always more or less inconvenient to the countries in which they are established, and destructive to those which have the misfortune to fall under their government."[5]

Bengal had been one of the richest agricultural areas in the world and certainly in India. When the British arrived, its ruin came swiftly. Within a few years, they almost killed the goose that laid their golden egg. Having conquered Bengal, the East India Company became a territorial power, a virtual state almost as big as France. But as Smith had warned, it was necessarily military and despotic. Its rulers had no sense of responsibility to the ruled and no sense of identification with them. They thought of their territory as a warehouse whose stores were theirs to draw down, and so gave themselves up to plunder. The British commander, Clive, became almost overnight one of the richest men in England, while his subordinates and other officers of the company made fortunes so great that when they returned to England they became the superrich for whom the name "Nabob" was coined.[6]

Clive was the biggest profiteer of the British lot, but even he was appalled by what he and his colleagues were doing. As he wrote, "such a scene of anarchy, confusion, bribery, corruption, and extortion was never seen or heard of in any country but Bengal; nor such and so many fortunes acquired in so unjust and rapacious a manner."[7]

While its agents made fortunes, the company itself was brought nearly to bankruptcy. But it had become too big to fail. Parliament,

goaded by the great parliamentarian Edward Burke, rebuked the management of the company for its ineptitude and corruption, but Parliament's concern was only that the company be a good investment for Englishmen. The way to do that was to starve the Indians. So, as Stanley Wolpert has written, "in the wake of British spoliation, famine struck and in 1770 alone took the lives of an estimated one-third of Bengal's peasantry."[8] Parliament ruled that the company was "in reality a delegation of the whole power and sovereignty of this kingdom sent into the East."[9] Parliament decided to take a more active role in its management and passed the India Act of 1784, authorizing government supervision of the company. That act would begin a process that led step by step to the proclamation of the empire in November 1858, with Queen Victoria as the first empress.

The semiprivatized imperialism that was fastened on Bengal, largely outside Parliament's control, developed a momentum of its own. Province by province, the government-controlled East India Company fought, bought, or subverted its way across India. For this a price had to be paid: the rise of the influence of the military. When the company's soldiers needed only to defend trading posts, a few British officers and Indian mercenaries sufficed. But as the tasks grew large and multiplied, the British found they needed far more. The company, which had enrolled about 18,000 sepoys in 1763, controlled by 1820 one of the largest armies in the world: some 350,000 men, almost all of them "Indian" troops. At midcentury, the military absorbed half of British India's revenues.[10]

Size mattered. It contributed to the growing separation of the company, both its civil officials and its military officers, from Indians. Whereas in earlier years the company's factors (traders) had worn Indian clothes, delighted in Indian food, and fathered mixed-race children, by the end of the eighteenth century, Indians, particularly Muslim Indians, and British no longer met socially. An anonymous contemporary English writer put the blame primarily on the arrival of English women. "The 'odious blacks,' the 'nasty heathen wretches,' " the writer commented, "are the shrill echoes of the 'black brutes,' the 'black vermin' of the husband. The children catch up this strain. I have heard one, five years old call the man who was taking care of him a 'black brute.' "[11]

Whether or not it is fair to blame such attitudes on English women, it is undeniable that their arrival made two emotional and even legal changes. First, whereas in earlier times, white European men had kept harems of Indian women, the thought of the reverse—Indian men with white women—caused grave concern. The vision of European women being "violated" by Indian men permeated some eighty English novels published in the nineteenth century.[12] This fear was used to justify

some of the worst actions of imperialism.

The second change added the clash of religion to the sexual issue. In the early nineteenth century, British officials and their growing families could treat Hinduism with amused scorn, but Islam was serious. Because it was identified as an enemy, it transformed itself into one. It took something over half a century for British imperial hauteur and Muslim humiliation to result in the level of hatred manifested in the great "revolt"—India's first war of independence—of 1857.

Islam had been introduced, as we saw, shortly after the inception of the Islamic state in Arabia. Then, in the sixteenth century, India was conquered by Turks coming out of Afghanistan and Central Asia. The great Mughal Empire that they founded stretched from Burma in the east to Iran in the west and from Afghanistan's Hindu Kush mountains in the north to the ports of Calicut and Pondicherry in the south. It was an area almost half as large as the United States. The Mughal Empire was the jewel in the crown of Islam but, by the middle of the nineteenth century, that jewel had fallen out. The British replaced the Mughal Empire with an empire of their own, but Islam continued to be the official religion of a number of Indian states. It had also become the religion of millions of Indians. And, as elsewhere throughout the Muslim world, the study of Islam gave rise to a theocratic bureaucracy devoted to preserving its literature and law.

A near contemporary of the great Damascus jurist Taqi al-Din bin Taimiyah (whom I discussed in Chapter 4), the Indian Islamicist Fakhr al-Din Zarridi, played a role much like Taimiyah's in the development of Indian fundamentalist thought, but, perhaps because he needed to win over his Hindu competitors, he advocated a more liberal interpretation of the ordinances of the Quran and the model of the *Hadith.* He probably realized that Taimiyah's strict interpretation of Islamic law would not work in India. Such a narrow interpretation was socially and politically possible in "Syria," where the opponent was Christianity, because the Quran gave the Christians the status of People of the Book. Christians could be tolerated because they and Muslims were fellow monotheists who believed in the same god. Hinduism, a polytheistic religion, was quite another thing. By a strict interpretation of the Quran, the choice offered to Hindus should be either conversion to Islam or death. That was the choice the first Arab invaders forced on the people they conquered in Sind. But as practical men, they soon realized that whatever the Quran required, they could not slaughter the whole population. So, more or less unannounced, they allowed the Hindus to worship their gods, provided they paid the head tax (*jizyah*) levied on Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians.

This tolerable relationship lasted for several centuries, during

which millions of Hindus converted to Islam. Some undoubtedly did so to escape the tax, but it seems likely that the vast bulk of the converts were fleeing the tyranny of the caste system. To be born an "out-caste" (*dalit*) was to be condemned to perpetual slavery; to convert to the brotherhood (*ikhwaniyah*) of Islam was to be liberated. Millions converted.

What to do about those who did convert was the doctrinal conundrum Zarridi addressed. Neither he nor other scholars of Islamic law solved the dilemma, but generals and kings had to. Throughout most of Indian history, they bowed to reality. There were just too many Indians; accommodation was the only practical policy. But from time to time, a ruler or a general would also be a true believer. In the eleventh century, India was invaded by a Turk, Mahmud, of the Afghan city-state of Ghazni. A patron of the arts and sciences, Mahmud funded his cultural programs by raids on the rich Indian cities. Raiding did not require coming to terms with social realities, but ruling did. So when Mahmud decided to stay and established a dynasty, he arbitrarily ruled that Hindus were to be treated as monotheists. Their polytheism was simply overlooked. Hindus became People of the Book.

More sophisticated, but less practical, was the great sixteenth-century ruler of the Mughal Empire, Akbar. Akbar was the follower of a Sufi master.[13] His mother was an Iranian of Shiah origin, and he married the daughter of the Rajput (Hindu) ruler of Amber. It is not surprising that he was both intellectually and practically sensitive to the complexities of India. Among his conciliatory gestures was the abolition of the jizyah, the tax imposed on non-Muslims.

Conciliation was not his only intercultural activity: he actively supported scholarship in his subjects' languages. Culturally, he tried to create a synthesis of Indian civilization. As Wolpert describes it, the Mughal court under Akbar, deeply influenced by Iranian culture, "acquired something of a 'national' patina, the cultural equivalent of the Mughal-Rajput alliance. The new syncretism, which has come to be called 'Mughlai' is exemplified by Akbar's encouragement of Hindi literature and its development."[14] But it is in religion that we find his most interesting activities. He and his courtiers openly "celebrated the most important Hindu festivals such as Diwali, the festival of lights." And he made innovations that struck at the heart of the Islamic system. In 1579, Akbar got the Islamic jurisconsults (ulamah) to declare that, as *sultan al-adil* (the just ruler), he was superior to the religious establishment, the *mujtahids,* and that therefore his rulings even on theological issues were binding on believers.[15] To solidify his claim, he proclaimed himself caliph on some of his coinage and ordered that sermons in mosques refer to him as the *amir al-muiminin,*

that is, caliph, in preference to the Ottoman caliph.[16] I want to suggest another, more interesting but more speculative, interpretation of his move. It is that Zoroastrianism, which I discussed in Part 1, may have influenced him in acquiring his new role. This possibility may bring out another dimension of the Muslim world.

As we saw in Part 1, Zoroastrianism shows remarkable similarities to Shiism, and Akbar's mother was of Shiah origin. He is known to have been fascinated by Zoroastrianism. Zoroastrians, then known as Parsees, had become established in western India in the twelfth century. He brought to his court the Zoroastrian theologian Dastur Mahyarji Rana in 1578 and began to perform Zoroastrian rituals; he apparently had the passion play performed and in 1580 even began using Zoroastrian terms in his calendar. It is possible that he was casting himself in something like the role that Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini would take in our time, the leader of both state and religion —uniting what Islam divides into religion and earthliness, din wa dunya.

Whether this is a correct reading or not, it is undeniable that Akbar was probing into various religions to find a faith he could believe in. He invited delegations of Jesuits, Jains, Sikhs, and Hindus to the new capital of Fathpur Sikri, which he built at the tomb of a Sufi saint. There he convened a sort of weekly seminar in "the House of Worship" (*Ibadat-i Khana*) so he could listen to debates among Hindu and Sufi scholars, and between them and Sunnah and Shiah Muslim scholars. He even included at least one atheist. Orthodox Muslims feared that he was losing his belief in Islam, and they were at least partly right. In 1582 he announced the "Religion of God," the *din-i ilahi.* As Professor S. Roy of the University of Calcutta has written,

> It is difficult to define the *din-i ilahi,* for its author did not define it. It was neither inspired by revelation nor based on any well-defined philosophy or theology. It was deism modified by Hindu and Zoroastrian influence, a religion without priests and books, an ethical rationalism leading to the ideal of mystic union of the soul with the divine, in which respect it was based on the Sufi idea of absorption of the soul in the Divine Being.[17]

The very idea of a synthesis of Islam and Hinduism was anathema to Muslim theologians, and they won the day. When Akbar died, the idea of fusion was buried with him, and differences between the two religions were reasserted with a vengeance. By the eighteenth century, leading Indian Muslims were moving toward the fundamentalist approach inspired by Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal and Taimiyah. Their absolute certainty of belief, and their belief that the "true faith" was under attack by Hinduism, ultimately led to the great breakup of South Asia into Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.[18] Meanwhile, they saw the intrusion of Christianity as the clear

and present danger.

The British East India Company was no friendlier to Christianity. When missionaries arrived, company officials tried to keep them out; the officials were there to get rich, and they had no patience for anyone who might disrupt their commerce. They regarded attacks on Hindu and Muslim beliefs as subversive and banned Christian missions, but starting in 1813 company officials were forced to let them in. Then, just as the older generation of officials had feared, the missionaries began to preach against both Hinduism and Islam. The attacks fell particularly heavily on Islam because the British had taken over the Mughal administration and were employing its officials, so Muslims were more visible in public gatherings.

These attacks occasioned at first only an intellectual response from the Indians: as the Muslim writer Amir Ali pointed out, the (English) pot was calling the (Indian) kettle black. He drew attention to the sorry record of the English in religious liberty. What gave the English, he asked, the moral right to criticize religious intolerance in India? Given their own history, to do so was just British hypocrisy. He wrote,

> After England became Protestant, the Presbyterians, through a long succession of reigns were imprisoned, branded, mutilated, scourged, and exposed in the pillory. In Scotland, they were hunted like criminals over the mountains; their ears were torn from the roots; they were branded with hot irons; their fingers were wrenched asunder by thumkins the bones of their legs were shattered in the boots. Even now Christian America burns alive a Christian negro for marrying a Christian white woman! Such has been the effect produced by Christianity. . . . In Christendom, difference of faith has been a crime, in Islam it is an accident.[19]

British antipathy to Indians was anchored in apartheid. As practiced in India, it was largely based on the English class structure. Little could be done about the English soldier, but the officer class was set apart in what amounted to English villages. They were populated only by English men, women, and children. Usually they were centered on a church and a social club, both of which were off limits to Indians regardless of their wealth or (Indian) social status.[20] An extreme version of the class divisions then common in England became the norm in India.

The conventions established to separate the rulers from the natives often took bizarre, childish, and (to Indians) humiliating forms. For example, if an Indian Muslim notable or even an official in the company administration was required, in the course of his duties, to call on a British official, he had to get a “certificate of respectability”

if he expected to be allowed to sit in a chair. He had to arrive on foot rather than in a carriage or on horseback. If he appeared in a court of law, even as a judge, he would not be given a chair.

The English were as strictly regulated as the Indians. To maintain his superior status, a "white man" could not walk anywhere outdoors but had to ride in a carriage or go on horseback. He could no longer, as in the eighteenth century, wear Indian clothes. As an Englishman wrote in 1827, "It was the extremity of bad taste to appear in anything of Indian manufacture."[21] One could not grow whiskers or eat curry. A proper white person must prove his Christianity by eating both beef and pork, whether he liked them or not. Violating these conventions would make one's life in the club intolerable and might even block one's career. The great English orientalist Richard Burton, who experienced these rules as a young officer in the Indian service, found them inane. A maverick, he did not last long in India.

Very occasionally, the official attitude drew criticism from religious authorities. The lord bishop of Calcutta noted in his diary (but not, so far as I can find, in any public sermon) "that exclusive and intolerant spirit, which makes the English, wherever they go, a caste by themselves, disliking and disliked by all their neighbors. Of this foolish, surly, national pride, I see but too many instances daily. . . . We shut out the natives from our society and a bullying, insolent manner is continually assumed in speaking to them."[22]

As I have mentioned in Part 1, the English also pioneered a "deculturalization" policy that they would later effect also in Egypt and that would be paralleled by the French in Algeria and Syria and by the Russians and Chinese in the Turkic areas of Central Asia. In India, the aim of education was, as the English historian and official laid it out, to create a new class of Indians who were "English in taste, in opinions, and in intellect." Study of Indian culture was to be limited to the Englishmen who would staff the administration.[23]

Lower-class Indians were hardly regarded as human beings. Even the architect of the "deculturalization" policy, Thomas Babington (later Lord) Macaulay, commented that during the early years of the nineteenth century, "thirty millions of human beings were reduced to the extremity of wretchedness. They had never [had to live] under tyranny like [the British rule]."[24] Some Englishmen, usually far from India, discussed how the Indians might be uplifted, but the consensus of the British rulers was that the Indians were a race apart and should be kept that way. As the modern Indian writer Shashi Tharoor has written, racism "infected every aspect of the empire. . . . Racism, of course, was central to the imperial project; it was widespread, flagrant and profoundly insulting, and it worsened as British power grew."[25]

One of the many examples of the scorn Englishmen felt for Indians

occurred in 1824. Britain had invaded Burma and was using its sepoy troops to "pacify" the country. Most of the sepoys sent to Burma were Brahmins, whose Hindu faith proscribed travel by sea as ritually polluting. The British knew this but chose not to consider it when they ordered the regiment to embark. The soldiers refused the order. So, without hesitation, the British brought up artillery and opened fire on them.

I find no proof that in 1830 the British economic policy had yet become a major issue to Indians as it later would, but it is difficult to believe that the export of quasi-slave Indian workers that began that year did not add to Indian discontent. It arose because England had abolished (black) slavery; from 1807 no British ship could carry slaves, and from 1808 no slave could be landed at any British port. But for years afterward, people were kept in virtual slavery by a variety of subterfuges. Some black former slaves were simply designated "apprentices." In India, peasants were subject to a form of obligatory and unpaid labor (*begar*) for the state and for landlords. Prisoners were customarily shipped abroad as slave workers. Meanwhile, the Dutch ran a regular slave business out of South India. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, they are thought to have rounded up and exported upwards of a million Indians.[26] By the end of the eighteenth century, Indian workers were found all over South and Southeast Asia. Ultimately, hundreds of thousands, probably millions, were kidnapped by press gangs, sent as prisoners, recruited, or forced by famine to replace the dwindling populations of black slaves on tea, sugar, and coffee plantations. Many would later be sent to work the rubber plantations of Malaya, triggering anger among its native Muslims. Some even reached the Caribbean, where they were auctioned off to planters and lived under laws adapted from former regulations for black and Amerindian slaves. Conditions on the virtual slave ships are reputed to have been even worse than those on the Middle Passage to the Americas.[27] Few ever returned to India.

Given such treatment, one must ask why any Indians would become sepoys and allow themselves to be used to subjugate other Indians. One answer put forward is that they had been accustomed to foreign rule for centuries. Another was that the salaries paid to sepoys, small as they were, often made the difference between existence and starvation for their families. Also, given the diversity of India's communities, as I have said, patriotism or nationalism had not yet become a compelling motivation. Finally, there was the undeniable sense of pride a poor peasant farmer got from serving as a uniformed soldier in a powerful army. That army's crushing defeat in the 1842 war in Afghanistan may be what first stirred the sepoys' disenchantment and planted the seeds of the great revolt of 1857.

The British, like the French and Russians, found native soldiers essential to their conquest and rule. This has not changed. Some governments still find the mercenary a valuable pawn in strategic games. He is relatively cheap to employ and seldom threatens the government that employs him with political backlash, as its own citizens might do if used and perhaps lost. At least in the nineteenth century, he cost nothing if he were killed. And if used outside his own community, against people with whom he had little emotional involvement, he could be expected to follow orders with little concern for morality or the law.

One cause of the great sepoy revolt was that the British violated the rules of service for native troops. It was safe to use them to attack other religions but dangerous to have them attack their own. Muslims could be used to attack Hindus or Hindus could be used to attack Muslims, but neither could be used against their own faith. In 1824, the British violated this rule with Hindus; in 1857 it was mainly with Muslims. Anger had been simmering for some years; it had numerous causes, but high among them must have been the daily humiliation to which Indians were subjected. Then in 1857 the British pulled the trigger that fired the uprising.

In the British view, there was no trigger but simply a stupid Asian failure to understand European technology. But in the Indian view, the technological change forced the soldiers to violate religious law. In fact it did not, but the British officers refused to explain. Their refusal illustrates the mind-set of imperialism.

At issue was the introduction of a new rifle, the Enfield, which was breech loading, could be fired much faster, and had a longer range than previous models. To prevent rust and corrosion in the humid Indian climate, the bullet was smeared with grease. To fire his gun, the trooper was to bite off the tip of the cartridge before loading. It was a sensible if rather messy procedure, but it overlooked Indian mores. If the soldier was a Muslim, he feared that the fat came from ritually unclean pigs, and, if a Hindu, from sacred cows. Both groups saw the procedure as yet another move to force them to forsake their religions and destroy their way of life.

To the British this was ignorant nonsense, and if the order to bite the bullet was not carried out, it was mutiny. When some troopers begged for a delay to allow for tests to prove that the grease was not ritually polluting, their commanders were furious. They flatly refused any delay and forced a test of loyalty. Regiment after regiment of Indian soldiers was drawn up, surrounded by artillery manned by English gunners and supported by English infantry and dragoons. When the troops were all in place, the sepoys were ordered to load their rifles. In the first encounters, if a sepoy refused, he was

immediately stripped of his uniform and sent home penniless. But this punishment was soon judged insufficient.

When the turn came for the largest of the British garrisons, stationed just outside Delhi, the British regarded compliance as the test to determine whether India would remain British. On the parade ground, the officers singled out eighty-five men whom they regarded as ringleaders or, in their evaluation, traitors. The scene was so dramatic and tells us so much about imperialism that it is worth repeating in the words of an English witness, Sir John William Kaye:

> The morning [of May 9, 1857,] dawned, lowering and gusty, and the troops of the Meerut Brigade were drawn up on the ground of the Sixtieth Rifles to see the prisoners formally dismissed to their doom. The Third Cavalry had received their order to attend unmounted. The European troops and the Artillery, with their fieldguns were so disposed as to threaten instant death to the sepoys on the first symptoms of resistance. Under a guard of Rifles and Carabineers, the Eighty-five were then brought forward, clad in their regimental uniforms—soldiers still and then the sentence was read aloud, which was to convert soldiers into felons. Their accouterments were taken from them, and their uniforms were stripped from their backs. Then the armourers and the smiths came forward with their shackles and their tools, and soon, in the presence of that great concourse of their old comrades, the Eighty-five stood, with the outward symbols of their dire disgrace fastened upon them. It was a piteous spectacle, and many there were moved with great compassion, when they saw the despairing gestures of those wretched men among whom were some of the very flower of the regiment—soldiers who had served the British government in trying circumstances and in strange places and who had never wavered in their allegiance.[28]

If men "who had never wavered in their allegiance" could, at the whim of an English general, be humiliated, deprived of the income on which their families' lives depended, chained in irons, and condemned to prison for a decade or more—for the crime of being unwilling to violate their religion (as they believed)—what would the British do to others? How far would the destruction of Indian life go? Many would not live to find out, but resentment that had grown for half a century suddenly exploded in violent hatred.

Yet the English were oblivious. They could not imagine, as we learn from a number of memoirs they later wrote, that the "nasty heathen wretches" could behave like real (that is, European, white) men. Without an English officer to tell them what to do, the English believed, the spineless brutes would do nothing. So, after the spectacle on the parade ground, the Englishmen and their families went to church and then to their clubs.

Deciding to behave like "real men" did take a few hours, but then the rebels rushed the prison and liberated the eighty-five men. After that, in growing rage, they killed some of their officers and their families. Apparently, at least in the English accounts, they then were

unsure what to do. Finally, they decided to seek a leader. The only one on whom they could agree, or perhaps even conceive, was the Mughal emperor. But he was a frail eighty-two-year-old man whom the British kept as a virtual prisoner in Delhi's Red Fort. When they arrived, the emperor was horrified. He wished only to be left to die in peace.

The mutineers must have been shocked. The only symbol of India they knew was not the brave leader they sought. The heir to the great warrior Babur was a pitiful old political eunuch. As Kaye wrote, the British rulers had made him into "a pageant, and a puppet . . . a King, yet no King—a something and yet a nothing—a reality and a sham at the same time."[29]

Perhaps in despair, they hoisted the green flag, their symbol of jihad, but they found no other leader. Despite the memories of the frequent wars of the past, there were no Indian generals with the kind of experience that American colonists had acquired in the French and Indian War, and that had served them so well in the American Revolution. While they fought bravely in small-scale actions, they were defeated by the absence of "a tactical plan or controlling mind and of disciplined organisation to press home their assault."[30]

The great revolt fractured into a series of vicious but meaningless local vendettas. Soon the British got the upper hand by their personal bravery, their superior organization, and their command of the contemporary weapon of mass destruction, the cannon.

More decisive than any of these, ironically, was their use of the idea of "India." The Muslim sepoy rebels failed to enlist Indian allies; indeed, the sepoys of Madras and Bombay and the still quasi-independent Sikhs rushed to aid the British. The communal rivalries that had been so crucial to the British conquest of India now made it impossible for the Indian factions to unite.

The killing of English officers and civilians, particularly of women, by the "nigger natives" evoked a primal hatred that was multiplied by fear. Some English officers actually recommended that Indian prisoners be flayed alive. Some prisoners were executed by being strapped over the breeches of cannon and blown to pieces—preferably in sight of an Indian audience.

Tens or hundreds of thousands—no one knows the number—were shot or hanged. Whole villages were burned even when the inhabitants had nothing to do with the revolt. Contemporary accounts graphically and often happily describe torture and murder. When the aged sultan surrendered with his family, the responsible British officer shot his sons, the last heirs to the Mughal throne.[31] The pitiful emperor was tried before a British court and exiled.

To terrify the Indian population and take revenge on the Indian soldiers in the British army who had risen in revolt in 1857, the British gathered large numbers of Indian civilians to watch them blow the insurgents from the muzzles of cannon. Vasily Vereshchagin illustrated this event in this 1884 painting.

Far from the hysteria of the fighting, Prime Minister Lord Palmerston was in favor of razing the city of Delhi, and the former governor-general Lord Ellenborough proposed castrating all the mutineers. Not surprisingly, the official history found the "retaliation not excessive. . . . The British soldier perpetuated no unnecessary slaughter."[32]

Historically, the most significant result of the rebellion was the incorporation of India into the British Empire so that Queen Victoria became empress of India. Of great local importance, most Muslims were excluded from the reconstituted British Army of India. They were no longer to be regarded as members of a "martial race."[33]

But the British learned from the mutiny to assuage the humiliation they had earlier inflicted on the Indian soldiers, so they began a program like the one they had found successful in taming the Scots. They granted honors, medals, robes of honor, and special dress to notable and loyal soldiers.[34] Just as the Scots were given colorful tartans and the Jordan desert patrol were given their dressed-up *thaubs* (robes), so the Indian soldiers were outfitted in costumes suitable for a Hollywood production of *The Arabian Nights*.

The campaign to win India for the second time was thus not military but psychological. It was massive, carefully orchestrated, and

almost universal. It received powerful support within the Muslim community.

The foremost surviving leader of Muslim opinion, Sayyid Ahmad Khan, was given a knighthood. He had supported the British during the mutiny and had distinguished himself by saving endangered English families. To him, it was an acceptable result that India was now part of the empire: what the Indians needed to do, he argued, was to accommodate while they modernized. They must educate themselves to a European standard in European subjects. To this end, he was instrumental in founding schools, including one that became the Aligarh Islamic University, and he promoted the use of a single national language to replace the former reliance on Arabic, Persian, and Turkish. But toward the end of his life, he concluded that the wounds of the revolt ran too deep to be healed and that some sort of separation of the Hindus and Muslims was inevitable. The question he could not face was how to see India without the British.

Among those who could were the Russians.

CHAPTER 9

Chechen Imam Shamil Resists Russian Imperialism

Russians had pushed toward India long before Peter the Great. Relations with the Islamic world began as early as the ninth century. Hordes of Arab coins have been found near the village surrounding the wooden stockade that came to be known as the Kremlin. The village grew into a town because it was well situated on the Moskva River, which connected to the Volga. The rivers were like highways for trade. But it was the Mongol (Tatar) conquest that gave Moscow its early importance. About 1330, Mongol-Turkic invaders began to use Moscow's chief, the Velilki Knizaz (roughly, "chief agent") Ivan Danilovich Kalita, as their tax collector for the whole northern area. By then the town was significant enough that the Orthodox Church established it as the seat of a metropolitan. But the Muscovite rulers, impressed with their own importance, overplayed their hand by inflicting a small defeat on a Mongol detachment; in retaliation, in 1382, one of Tamerlane's generals sacked and burned the town. Perhaps that was the beginning of the Russian fear of "encirclement" that has always lain at the heart of Russian strategy and in our days has created a crisis over the expansion of NATO.

The first "great" ruler of Muscovy was Ivan III, who enormously expanded the reach of the city-state and in 1480 managed to break loose from Tatar domination. To symbolize the new independence and his ambitions for a larger life, Ivan took a Byzantine princess as his wife and began building what he called the "Third Rome" around the reconstructed Kremlin. His grandson, Ivan IV, "the Terrible" (Russian: *Grozny*), picked up where Ivan III left off. He is usually thought of as the father of Russian autocracy, creating a new military bureaucracy (the *oprichnina*) and virtually eliminating the old upper class (the boyars). He was also the father of Russian imperialism.

With the northeast already under Moscow's control and the lands to its west blocked by powerful German rulers, Ivan turned to the

southeast and launched a campaign against the Muslim khanate of Kazan. To Ivan, who was deep into mysticism, an attack on Muslims perhaps seemed a religious duty, but it was also a logical strategic move. That was how it appeared to the leader of the first English trading mission, Richard Chancellor. With his eye fixed on commerce, he reported that alongside the Kremlin "runneth a river called Mosua which runneth into Tartarie and so into the sea called Mare Caspium."[1] The road south was open.

Taking that road, Ivan's forces breached the walls of the ancient city Kazan on the Volga in 1552. Muscovy thus acquired a relatively advanced but exotic country with its own political institutions, social system, economic organization, and cultural values. The conquest signaled the transformation of Muscovite Russia from a centralized national state into a multinational empire, a development of crucial importance for subsequent Russian history. It also fixed on Russian policy toward the Muslim city-states an attitude comparable to that of the Spanish Reconquista: whatever had motivated Ivan, the Russian wars became a sort of crusade. As Ivan's personal chaplain is alleged to have said, his goal was "to convert the pagans to the Faith even if they do not deserve it."

The two emerging empires, Ivan's Russia and Queen Elizabeth's England, hit on one of the first military assistance programs. In return for weapons, Ivan offered Elizabeth passage down the Volga to the markets of Central Asia. Ivan wanted more. He even talked vaguely of marrying Elizabeth, whom he referred to as "our loving sister," but imperial disagreements soured the relationship before it was even seriously considered. Ivan changed his address to Elizabeth to *poshlaia dvitsa* (common wench).

Elizabeth, if she even knew of Ivan's interest in some sort of deal, would have been right to be cautious. Not that Russia posed any threat to England, as the English later believed it did to their empire in India, but it was itself under powerful attack. At least in that part of Asia, the balance between the North and the South had not yet completely shifted. Moscow and other Russian cities, which had been ruled by the Mongols from the time of Genghis Khan, were frequently raided by the Crimean Tatars, who were Muslim descendants of the Mongol conquerors.

The Crimean Tatars would remain the great Muslim enemy of Russia for the next two centuries. During at least the first century of that time, the customs of the urban Russians resembled those of the Tatars, Afghans, Iranians, Indians, and other Muslims. Women lived in purdah and customs were minutely prescribed in a printed guide, the *Domostroy*. It was not differences in customs that inflamed Russian-Turkish hostilities. It was dominion.

The Russians started to destroy, one after another, the Muslim principalities. Some were easy; others were too powerful or too dedicated. For nearly two centuries, Crimea, the most powerful of the heirs to the Mongol-Turkic empire, was beyond their reach. The Crimean Tatars actually struck back: they raided Moscow in 1571 and were said to have taken perhaps 150,000 prisoners to be sold as slaves in the Ottoman Empire. As described by the English merchant Richard Hakluyt, the "emperour fled out of the field, and many of his people were carried away by the Crimme Tartar:[2] to wit, all the young people, the old they [did] not meddle with, but let them alone, and so with exceeding much spoile and infinite prisoners, they returned home again."[3]

Russia lapsed into a half century of virtual anarchy. The decline of central authority allowed experimentation with changes in custom. Among them, upper-class women began for the first time to emerge from purdah. Moscow shed the "Orient" at home even while it continued conquering the Orient. Both policies got a boost when, in 1632, Ukraine recognized its suzerainty. With Ukraine's help, the tsars began a new round of wars on the Crimean Tatars.

When Peter the Great returned from his sojourn in Western Europe in 1696 and set out to build Russia into a modern power, he turned east from Crimea to follow the Oxus River toward the Caspian Sea and Iran. He was looking for sources of gold, silk, and cotton to fund his modernization program, and a member of the Georgian royal family encouraged him to think that these were available in Iran.

Peter thought he had his opportunity in 1721, when he learned of an Afghan invasion of Iran. Suddenly filled with brotherly feelings for the beleaguered shah, he gathered a huge force, said to have been about one hundred thousand men—but rulers always err toward the grandiose—to sail down the Caspian from Astrakhan in July 1722. When the army had landed, about halfway to the modern city of Baku, Peter remarked to one of his officers that he was at the first stage of a "road to India [on which] no one can interfere with us."

But the nearby Muslim khanate of Khiva did interfere, and devastatingly. Its little army attacked and almost annihilated the Russian force. Peter did not give up. A few years later, he sent a much smaller mission, about five thousand men, to conquer Khiva. But winter and disease proved as effective against the Russians as they would later be against Napoleon's Grande Armée. Only one in five Russians survived the Khiva campaign. But losses did not stop the Russians. A brutal system of conscription among the serfs gave them virtually unlimited manpower, which they would draw on to conquer their next Muslim objective, the Caucasus.[4]

Conquering the Caucasus became a fixed idea in Russian strategy.

Despite being only one of many endeavors, extended in every direction, the Caucasus stood out as a sort of romantic quest. To the Russians, it had some of the aura the Great Plains and its wild Indians had for Americans, or the Moroccan deserts and the untamed Berbers had for the French. Around 1800, Russian forces began to push into the region, expecting to brush aside any opposition. To anchor their advances, they built strong redoubts in strategic places and began to expropriate land. Point by point the analogy with American Manifest Destiny strikes the eye. The natives were colorful and individually heroic but were, of course, just "savages," not quite human beings. But the analogy should not be pushed further. The American Indians, at least on the plains, had no good place to hide, while the Caucasians lived in one of the most rugged landscapes in the world. The American Indian tribal structure was fragmented and offered no unifying ideology, while the Caucasians had an overarching religious order. There and throughout the Muslim world, Sufis played a key role in fighting against the North and in unifying the peoples among whom they lived. Indeed, we may think of the Naqshbandi Sufi order as a sort of "nation of the mind." And, like the Chechen peoples of the windswept Caucasian mountains and dense forests, it was militant. When the Russians began to arrive, the Chechens were already under real and metaphoric arms.

Resistance under the leadership of the Naqshbandi Sufi order began in 1828. Six years later, the order was taken over by one of the most remarkable guerrilla leaders of a century marked by great guerrilla leaders. Imam Shamil would spend the next twenty-five years fighting to maintain Chechnya's independence and to protect Islam from what he thought would be its extinction among its people. He is remembered in Chechnya today as the nation's greatest hero.

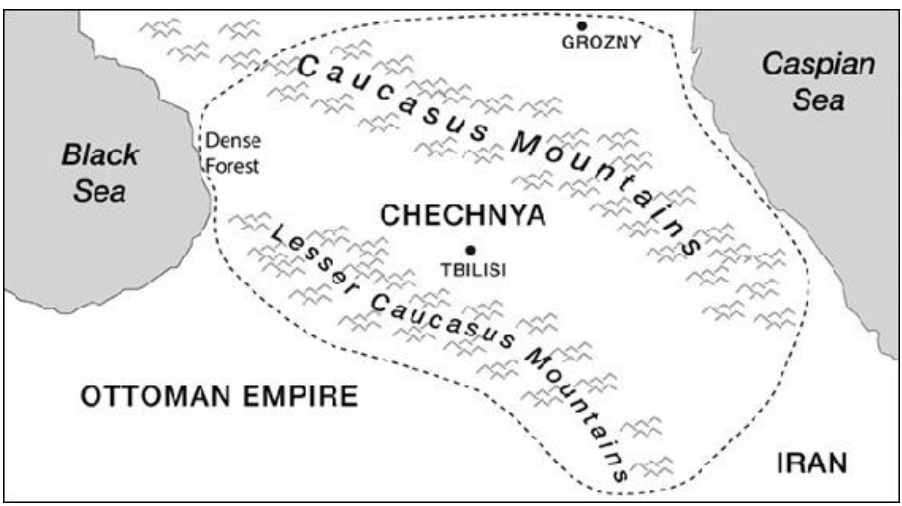
Imam Shamil led the Chechen resistance against the Russians for nearly half a century. He is pictured here in about 1850 in the characteristic dress of the Caucasian mountaineers.

When Russia emerged from the Crimean War in 1856, many of its military officers were anxious to recover their battered prestige. As we know from our own experience in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, this is a common result of defeat, one that often leads to new wars. War with the Muslims was “available.” It was the best way for generals to salve their egos and also win promotions. They seized the opportunity. Sometimes in violation of the orders of the tsar or his ministers, they attacked the central Asian khanates: Samarqand in 1865, Bukhara in 1866, Tashkent in 1868, and Khiva in 1873. But it was the campaigns in the Caucasus that brought Russian imperialism into focus. The battles in the Caucasus were among the hardest fought, most vicious, and significant imperialist wars of a century distinguished by the brutality of the North against the South.

Consider what distinguishes the Caucasus. An extraordinarily complex and rugged area, its mountains rise to eighteen thousand feet

above sea level; valleys plunge like troughs thousands of feet deep; temperatures range from stifling summers to bitter winters; dense forests near the Black Sea give way to high, rocky cliffs. Level land is rare, snowfall is heavy, and avalanches are common. To live in those circumstances, people had to divide themselves among scores of villages and hamlets. In the words of John F. Baddeley, the most experienced and competent observer of the Russian invasion and the Muslim resistance,

> The Caucasus is essentially a mountain country. . . . It may be said without exaggeration that the mountains made the men; and the men in return fought with passionate courage and energy in defence of their beloved mountains, in whose fastnesses, indeed, they were well-nigh unconquerable. Yet, by one of those strange contradictions that meet us on all sides, strength and weakness went hand in hand. The very height and ruggedness of the great ranges, the profound depth and steepness of the valleys, the vast spread of the primeval forest, made union impossible; and without unity the tribes in the long run were bound to fall before the might of Russia.[5]



The Chechens, organized by Sufi Muslims, fought the invading Russians for half a century in the rugged mountains and dense forests of the Caucasus.

It took from the end of the eighteenth century until the Russian victory in 1864 for the Caucasians to "fall before the might of Russia." So who were the Caucasians, and how did they define themselves?

The population of the Caucasus around the middle of the nineteenth century was roughly four million. They were divided into a number of groups that spoke a variety of languages, and even the majority are known by multiple names—we know them as Circassians or Chechens, while the Russians called them Cherkes and they called themselves Vainakhs.[6] In the mountains the rough terrain almost demanded diversity. Stretching east from the Black Sea was a vast

forest. Trees did there what mountains and valleys did in the center: they scattered the population into isolated hamlets. Having hacked out plots of agricultural land from the forests, the inhabitants supported themselves by farming, supplemented by hunting animals and by raiding distant communities. Villagers fought their neighbors, much like the clans of Arabia, under the stern rules of a pre-Islamic code of honor. Their feuds made for a colorful but violent and fractured society. As Baddeley found, despite their common adherence to Islam, they could not unite to stop the invading Russians.

Eventually, the Russian invaders drove an estimated one million men, women, and children, or one in four or five inhabitants, out of their homeland. Most of those who reached the Black Sea were evacuated by fellow Muslims Turks and given sanctuary in the Ottoman Empire. Some ended up in Jordan, Syria, or Lebanon. But just as happened in today's mass exodus of Syrian refugees, many drowned at sea or died of starvation or other causes along the way.

The Russians fought the Circassians in a classic counterinsurgency campaign. They stole or slaughtered livestock, burned hundreds of villages, and cut down the forests. As Baddeley wrote, "The Russians made no permanent impression upon them save when and where they cut down the beech trees, and it is literally the fact that they were beaten in the long run not by the sword but by the axe." The counterinsurgency lasted roughly a century, so that generation after generation lived entirely at war.[7] That way of life shapes peoples as surely as religion or nationality.

The region to the east of the Circassian area was even more diverse and much more rugged, with a deeply divided population. They had no common language but spoke some thirty languages and dialects. As Baddeley observed during his travels there, even within one major ethnic group, the Avars, numbering only about 125,000 people at the time of the war with Russia, there was a deep split. First of all, he found, they did not refer to themselves as "Avars."[8] Each village considered itself a separate group or even nation, as the Egyptians considered their *watans* and the bedouin their *qawms*. In Russian, they would be considered *narodnost,* nationalities without a territory. What sustained them was not so much territory but pride. No matter how poor they were, the Avars thought of themselves as aristocrats.

The main unifying force was the Naqshbandi order of Sufi Muslims. Like the Sanusiyah order in North Africa, the Naqshbandiyah considered themselves orthodox Muslims but espoused tolerance and accommodated themselves to local traditions. They accepted even those customs (*adat*) that violated the Quran, such as deadly vendetta. By tolerating some they gained much. They were immensely popular across many villages, valleys, and dialects. While they tried to stay

above local hostilities, on religion they were adamant. Crucially for the war against the Russians, the Naqshbandi order justified, and to a degree created, a military and political supratribal structure. Just as the Prophet Muhammad thought of his inner group as the "believers" and the Sanusiyah distinguished themselves from their nomad followers, so the leaders of the jihad against the Russians distinguished between the Sufi devotees (known as *Murids*) and the general body of the insurgents. This inner core of the Murids, who probably never numbered more than a few hundred,[9] gave them coherence and strength in the war. The head of the order, and so the commander of the insurgents, was their *imam*.

Like other religious orders, the Naqshbandiyah waned over time. The modern historian Charles King thought the religious revival that facilitated the resistance to the Russians was fostered by the Russian policy of trying to suppress it.[10] This observation is borne out repeatedly in other insurgencies. Russian counterinsurgency then, like the counterinsurgency tactics we observe today, created enemies. As Baddeley observed,

> The Russians, moreover, made the cardinal mistake of confirming and supporting with their moral prestige, and by force of arms when necessary, those native rulers who, in reliance on such backing, oppressed more than ever their unhappy subjects. . . . The law of Muhammad, on the other hand, proclaimed equality for all Mussulmans, rich and poor alike; the new teaching [of Naqshbandiyah] was therefore essentially popular, and from this time onward Muridism was a political movement grafted upon one purely religious.[11]

What finally brought these movements and sentiments to fruition was a succession of imams, of whom the most important was Shamil. But the best known outside the Caucasus, because of his appearance in Russian books, was Hajji Murad.[12] Shamil and Hajji Murad were the third and fourth in the sequence of leaders of the Caucasian resistance. Others would follow.

Early in his command, Shamil tried to negotiate a peace with the Russians. Apparently, he offered to accept Russian sovereignty, without specifying to the Russian government what that meant, if that government recognized the *Shariah* in the areas subject to their rule.[13] The Russians had no interest in such a proposition. To the tsar, the Caucasians were simply another breed of bandits whom he was determined to suppress—or exterminate.[14]

The power of religion was nearly the only power Shamil had. He realized that his followers' shared belief in Islam was the most important unifying force at his disposal, and he used it ruthlessly. He had to: the people in the Caucasus, divided by language and culture, had a natural tendency to split into small groups. Each one was

concerned only with its advantage and was willing, as the opportunity arose, to turn against the others. Shamil was able to sustain his struggle only through discipline and punishment so draconian that he once employed it against his own mother.

Shamil's legendary punishment of his mother gives some insight into the leadership challenge he faced. His unwavering opposition to the Russian thrust into the Caucasus was costly and painful even when successful, which was not often; when it failed, as it usually did, it was ruinous. So, as in all examples of what I have called violent politics, "moderates," particularly those whose interests are most exposed, wanted to reach some arrangement to stop abstract ideals from further damaging already painful realities.[15] Moderates are an insurgency's most dangerous opponents because they are knowledgeable insiders who promise an end to pain. So, in every insurgency I have studied, leaders react more sternly against their own moderates than against the enemy. So it was with Shamil.

In 1843 a group of Shamil's followers decided that the war was lost and that accommodation with the Russians was preferable to starvation. They knew that they could not persuade Shamil to accept this, but they thought perhaps his mother, to whom he was absolutely devoted, could. So they bribed her to encourage him to give up. She actually tried, but Shamil learned the details of the plot. The plotters were important members of the Chechen community, and he realized that if he had them killed, it would further split his ranks. Their execution might lead to vengeance against him or perhaps cause them to go over to the Russians.

He revealed the plot to his followers and then, cleverly, declared it to be so serious as to be beyond human reason; he would seek God's ruling. He said he would go into the mosque and fast and pray until God or his Prophet told him what to do. In what must have seemed a rather grand ceremony, he gathered his Sufi followers, the Murids, who were all dressed in black, and as many of the people as possible around the mosque to assist him with their prayers. Then he disappeared inside the mosque. As Baddeley heard the legend recounted half a century later,

> Three days and nights the door remained closed, and the crowd outside, worn out by prayer and fasting, and worked to the highest pitch of religious fervour, in vain awaited the reappearance of their Imam. At last a movement was heard inside the building: a quiver of expectation ran through the people; the door slowly opened, and Shamil appeared on the threshold, pale, exhausted, with bloodshot eyes, as from much weeping. Accompanied by two of his Murids he silently ascended the flat roof of the mosque, and at his command his mother was brought there, wrapped in a white shawl. Led by two moulids [clerics], with slow, uncertain steps she approached her son, who for some minutes gazed upon her without speaking. Then, raising his

> eyes to heaven, he exclaimed:—O Great Prophet Muhammad! Sacred and unchangeable are thy commands! Let thy just sentence be fulfilled as an example to all true believers.[16]

Then he ordered one of his followers to give his mother a hundred lashes. That must have stunned the crowd, as such an ordeal would have killed her. After five blows, Shamil signaled his man to stop the punishment. There must have been a collective sigh of relief. But then Shamil said he would take the rest of the punishment himself and ordered his man to carry it out. The combination of his dedication and the announced decision of God must have more effectively stopped dissent than any other move he could have made. As Baddeley wrote, "Such were the peoples who, with no outside assistance, with no artillery but what they could capture from the enemy, with no trust but in Allah and His Prophet, their own right hands and flashing blades, defied the might of Russia for more than half a century; defeating her armies, raiding her settlements, and laughing to scorn her wealth, her pride, and her numbers."[17]

In his fictional account of that struggle, *Hadji Murad,* Leo Tolstoy, who in his youth fought in the campaign against Shamil, renders the conflict in a charming metaphor. He has his Russian narrator try to pluck a colorful thistle:

> The thistle, known locally as a "Tatar," was firmly rooted, and pulling it proved a very difficult task. Not only did the stalk prick on every side—even through the handkerchief I wrapped around my hand—but it was so tough that I had to struggle with it for nearly five minutes, breaking the fibers one by one, and when I had at last plucked it, the stalk was all frayed and the flower itself no longer seemed so fresh and beautiful. Moreover, owing to its coarseness and stiffness, it did not seem in place among the delicate blossoms of my nosegay. I threw it away feeling sorry to have vainly destroyed a flower that looked beautiful in its proper place. But what energy and tenacity. With what determination it defended itself, and how dearly it sold its life![18]

Tolstoy's thistle had required five minutes of pain; the actual war took decades. It was a wasting process. The South was bound to lose, but "how dearly it sold its life!" After decades of resistance, Shamil finally stood submissive at the feet of the tsar.

The true believer had failed; his use of religion was powerful but could not stop the avalanche of an inexhaustible supply of serfs-turned-soldiers. Some even believe, with Shamil himself, that the very struggle he carried out for so long and at such cost "made it easy for his conquerors to hold in peace what it had cost them so much to win; for he had to some degree accustomed the tribes to habits of discipline, teaching them to fight together in a common cause while rigorously repressing their mutual hostility. It follows that in the long run—paradoxical as it must sound—Muridism was the instrument, not

the enemy, of Russian domination."[19]

And the tools of empire were not only weapons. The North had much to offer the South. Shamil's children, like the children of insurgent leaders all over the Muslim world, delighted in passing into a richer world.[20] The father's ordeal, which seems wildly romantic to the European reader, was unacceptably uncomfortable for his children. They venerated but chose not to follow the dangerous and painful trail he had followed. He took his place alongside Umar al-Mukhtar of Libya, Abd al-Qadir of Algeria, and Abd al-Karim of Morocco. Perhaps with the balm of time, the terrorist leaders of our own time will be similarly romanticized by future generations.

But for the people of the South, the balm of time soothed only intermittently. While the early insurgents' children were happy to put aside the fierce fighters and opt for a more comfortable life—and even some of those who were warriors in their youth were happy in later life to settle down to enjoy the fruits of their success—grandchildren or later generations revert to the fervor of their ancestors. So it has been in the Caucasus, where the fire doused by the Russians has been rekindled in our time. In 1990 the Chechens again fought for independence, a fight that would last for the next six years. History is a sequence that did not end sometime in the past. Names and dates change, but the process, which in the Caucasus stretched over nearly two centuries, recurs again and again.

CHAPTER 10

Bankers on Horseback

Not all the relations between the North and the South were military, although it was clear to both that recourse to arms was always an option. As we have seen, the British particularly made a sustained effort to establish hegemony in commerce. In 1836, they commissioned a series of studies by Dr. John Bowring on the economies of the South to find out what they could sell, what markets were most promising, and what obstacles stood in their way.[1] Even before the results were available in 1839, the British government promulgated a commercial code, which it forced the sultan to approve, thus opening the markets of the Ottoman Empire to free trade.[2] Since such native industry as had been created was weak, poorly financed, and without access to sources of crucial raw materials and energy, it was immediately swamped by imports, particularly from England and France. Mehmet Ali, who had achieved a large degree of autonomy within the empire but whose position was not recognized by Britain and France, refused to agree to the code, rightly understanding it to represent the ruin of Egyptian industry and the denationalization of its commerce.[3]

Bowring had found the Middle East and particularly the Muslims to be backward, failing to "accumulate capital and . . . to practice the arts progressively. . . . All productive labour—all usefully employed capital is regarded as belonging to something mean and secondary." [4] In the European thought of the time, this attitude and these failures—inefficiency, backwardness, and opposition to penetration by European goods into local markets—amounted to virtual crimes and justified imperialism.[5]

Economic imperialism came down to a simple proposition: colonial peoples were to produce raw materials for European industry. This was the policy that Britain imposed on the American colonies, and it contributed to the anger that led to the Revolution. In America, the British allowed the colonials to turn iron ore into pig iron to ship to

England but forbade them from producing steel, so they could not make good axes or shovels.[6] In Egypt and India, textile factories were prevented from producing finished cloth. Craftsmen were ruined, but farmers kept on producing raw cotton for export to England to be made into cloth in Birmingham or Manchester.

Europeans, and particularly the English, wanted to buy primary products and sell manufactured products. They did not want Egypt or India, both of which produced a substantial amount of finished goods, to compete with their burgeoning industry. But they needed raw cotton to feed their mills, and in 1831 Mehmet Ali began to have Egypt produce it on a large scale. The brand of cotton produced in Egypt was particularly valuable for cloth and was avidly sought by the mills of England. As the English saw it, this was a proper arrangement: the South did the agricultural work and the North handled the industrial production.

There were two downsides to this arrangement: first, the South was kept relatively poor, since it could not add value to its agriculture; second, what it produced it could not consume. Its crops were raised for export. Thus it became tied to the world market. And in the middle of the century, it was on a financial roller coaster. The outbreak of the Crimean War in 1853 caused a rapid rise in prices and stimulated production, but the return to peace in 1856 caused a drop in price of about 50 percent. Four years later, in 1860, the United States was supplying over 80 percent of the cotton used in European industry. Then the outbreak of the Civil War and the imposition of a blockade on the Confederacy, the area that produced the cotton, caused a famine in the English textile mills. British purchases from Egypt increased from eight million to twenty-two million between 1861 and 1865. After the defeat of the Confederacy, prices fell, and many Egyptians who had overinvested were ruined.

What happened in Egyptian agriculture was mirrored in finance. The great project of the middle of the nineteenth century was the digging of the Suez Canal. With the technology of the time, the hundreds of millions of tons of sand, earth, and rock had to be dug with picks and shovels by tens of thousands of peasant workers and carted away in bags and buckets on their shoulders and on donkey carts. The scale of the project was fitting for the land of the pyramids. Indeed nothing on that scale had been done since the pyramids were built. As everyone then acclaimed it, it was the very symbol of the advance of civilization. Few then were aware that it also began the silent invasion by the North of the Muslim world. The invaders marched under the banner of predatory finance.

The canal was not a new idea. A shorter canal existed already in ancient times. It had long since fallen out of use, but Europeans kept

alive the memory of it. And during his occupation of Egypt, Napoleon actually rode horseback along what he thought was its route. Had he stayed in Egypt, he might have begun restoration. That was enough to frighten the British government. It feared that the opening of a faster, more economical route to India would pose a threat to its growing eastern empire. So when the idea approached implementation half a century later, the British tried to stop it. They were particularly disturbed that the project was raised by a Frenchman, Ferdinand de Lesseps.

Lesseps had identified with Egypt for most of his adult life and had long dreamed of the canal. He was born in France the year that Mehmet Ali seized power in Egypt, 1805. Well connected in postrevolutionary France, he served without great distinction in its consular corps. But his postings brought him into contact with the family of Mehmet Ali of Egypt, while his family connections gave him entrée to the then ruler of France, Napoleon III. In taking up one of his posts, to Alexandria in 1832, he was held for some days in quarantine. Having had that experience myself, I know that the days hang heavy with boredom. While he was immobilized and probably also bored, Lesseps was given a booklet to pass the time. It was a memoir written by Jacques Marie Le Pèone, an engineer in Napoleon's Institut d'Égypte, on the project that had fascinated Napoleon: restoring or creating a canal linking the Red Sea to the Mediterranean would open the way to India. No less than Napoleon, Lesseps was captivated. Like Napoleon, he saw the glory of ancient Egypt through the veil of modern poverty. For years he mulled over, consulted on, and planned the project; then, twenty-two years later, in 1854, he returned to Egypt.

One of the first things he did was to renew contact with Mehmet Ali's fourth son, whom he had gotten to know during his earlier visit. The son, Said Pasha, had become Egypt's de facto ruler. Lesseps fell on him like a lover. He paid court day and night until finally he laid before the much younger Egyptian his dream. In a remarkable bout of affection and enthusiasm, Said Pasha gave him a concession to create a canal. It was an act that would shape Egypt and indeed the whole course of imperialism for the next century.

Lesseps was determined to make it happen. And with remarkable cunning, patience, persistence, and skill, he set out.

First he got the Egyptians to direct two of their expatriate employees, French engineers, to make the study and produce the preliminary plan of the canal. With that in hand, Lesseps got Said Pasha to commit Egypt to furnish the main elements of the project, the bulk of the money needed to prove to other investors that the project was real, and the virtually free labor of about twenty thousand

conscripted Egyptian laborers. With these in hand, he then organized the Compagnie Universelle du Canal Maritime de Suez and began to raise additional funds from European, mainly French, investors.[7]

He could offer European investors a virtual gold mine, with the gold being dug for free by others and most of the other requirements already paid for by the owner. Even in an age of robber barons—the Morgans, Guggenheims, Rockefellers, and Rothschilds—the terms of the concession stood out as a feat of near theft. The terms were almost the antithesis of those under which even the oil concessions were later given to Britain and France. Lesseps was a ruthless, patient, and brilliant entrepreneur. And he shamelessly used his relationship with Said Pasha to drive his ambition.

Said Pasha either personally or on behalf of Egypt (which he regarded as sharing a pocket with him) purchased over half of the company stock, but the stock he got was restricted and the amount of benefit he was to receive was held at less than 15 percent of the net profits.

So obviously unprofessional and unethical was the deal that when a new ruler came to Egypt in 1863, he refused to be bound by it. Ismail Pasha turned to the French government, which was then headed by Napoleon III, to arbitrate. It was a poor choice, as Napoleon III was hardly neutral. He forced the Egyptian ruler to pay Lesseps the then-enormous sum of nearly £4 million, which in today's purchasing power would have amounted to about $1 billion. Egypt paid.

Then, as the economic historian David Landes has written, when the company needed new infusions of cash, Lesseps literally plundered the Egyptian treasury of "untold amounts . . . for indemnities, fraudulent and semi-fraudulent claims, exorbitant prices to purveyors and contractors and all manner of bribes designed to buy cheap honours or simply respite from harassment."[8] Even these acts were not enough. As Landes explains, relying on French diplomatic pressure and bribery, Lesseps got the Egyptian government to buy

> a catch-all of rubbish that was either no longer of use to the company or never belonged to it in the first place. By agreement of July 1869, the canal [company] sold to the Egyptian government those barracks, hospitals and other structures built to serve during construction and not required: a stone quarry that the company had been *allowed* to exploit for purposes of building and maintaining the waterway . . . [and] divers other imaginary "rights". . . . The Egyptian government paid 30 million francs for the package. Since it had no cash, it abandoned its rights to interest and dividends on its share in the company for a period of twenty-five years. Lesseps in turn issued at 260 francs 120,000 assignment bonds covering the detached capons; the gross yield to the company on the transaction was therefore almost 60 millions, while the purchasers of the assignments could hope for a total of about 110 million francs in interest alone during the period in question. As though this were insufficient, the Egyptian government also agreed to share with the

company the proceeds of future sales of improved land along the canal, in spite of the fact that the Emperor's arbitration had specifically enjoined the company from seeking any profit from this source.[9]

Ismail Pasha suffered from the fact that his dynasty was an interloper in Egypt. His father and each of his brothers obviously had a primary interest in solidifying their rule. They could do so only if Egypt was recognized as independent of the Ottoman Empire. So they threatened, cajoled, and bribed to get the Ottoman sultan to agree that Egypt was an independent state. They failed because the British government had decided to support the empire to block Russian penetration of the Middle East and thought it needed to keep Egypt in the empire to enforce its policy. Mehmet Ali and his successors spent lavishly trying to accomplish their aim. Ismail also engaged in a large and expensive public relations program to demonstrate Egyptian independence: To celebrate the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, he went all out. He prepared a gala for the royalty of Europe, even building palaces to house them, and he commissioned Verdi to write a sort of national epic of Egypt. To that we owe the opera *Aïda.*

Borrowing money for all these and other tasks was no problem. European banks pandered to the ruler's desires.[10] Ismail was besieged by bankers, and he began contracting ever-larger loans. When he had become pasha, Egypt's external debt was £3.3 million; under Ismail it rose to £94 million. It was runaway debt that provided the excuse for the Europeans to intervene. Unquestionably much of what was borrowed was wasted, but Britain and France created the matrix in which the Egyptian government had to operate: they allowed or even encouraged fraudulent transactions and forced Egypt to remain in a wasteful relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Worse, once Lesseps had lured Said Pasha into the canal project—a scheme Egypt did not need and could not afford—they rigorously enforced Egypt's obligation to repay the loans, which were partly fictitious. The imperial powers had the Egyptian government by the throat. As the contemporary investigative reporter J. Seymour Keay pointed out, only about half of the debt was "even nominally received," and on some loans the rate of interest was over 26 percent.[11] One loan with a nominal value of £9 million was actually given in worthless defaulted bonds.

Perhaps the scale of sharp practice can be summarized in one deal that was made in 1865 for £3 million: the Egyptians actually received £2.2 million but ended up owing £4.1 million plus additional fees and penalties.

Despite the malpractice by the banks, the naïveté of the Egyptians, and the British charge that most of the money "was squandered,"[12] Ismail Pasha, the Egyptian ruler who inherited Said Pasha's failures

and the bankers' malpractice, constructed over eight thousand miles of irrigation canals, nine hundred miles of railroads, five thousand miles of telegraphs, 430 bridges, and the harbor of Alexandria and reclaimed over a million acres of farm land. He may justly be credited with building the Egypt that Britain seized.

The effects of the financial assault were not long in coming. The Egyptians sold their shares in the canal to the British government at virtually a liquidation price, £4 million. In 1875, two years later, about two-thirds of Egyptian revenues were devoted to servicing the foreign debt. The sale did not solve the financial crisis. So, as though it were a commercial company, Egypt was, in effect, placed in receivership by its European creditors and their governments. Finally, in 1879, Britain "regime changed" Egypt and forced Ismail off its shaky throne. They chose a weak replacement who would do as he was ordered by the bankers. Their orders were to create a National Liquidation Commission to take over the Egyptian economy.

The National Liquidation Commission then ordered various cuts in the Egyptian budget, including the salaries of the Egyptian army officers. This act led to a rebellion by the officers, whose leader, Ahmad Arabi (confusingly to those not familiar with Arabic, also spelled Urabi Pasha), was the first native Egyptian to achieve high military rank.

Arabi was not a great man on the level of the other national leaders I will discuss in the following chapters, but his rebellion so frightened the ruler, the bankers, and the European governments that they sent warships to bombard Alexandria. The French then stood aside while the British landed troops that defeated the Egyptians at the Battle of Tal al-Kabir. They then took control of the country and installed a government, making Egypt in fact but not in name a colony. They would rule it for the next thirty-two years through a British official called a "consul general." The reason for this subterfuge was that they feared that if the British formally split Egypt off from the Ottoman Empire and admitted that it was their colony (as they could afford to do in 1914), their action would give license to Russia to complete the destruction of the Ottoman Empire.

The consul general, who ruled Egypt from 1882 to 1907 and who became Lord Cromer, was a member of the English banking family, the Barings, and it was natural that he took as his government's primary task the repayment of debts to the European banks. What that policy did to the Egyptian people was of little concern: what mattered was that the British administration was honest, competent, and economical, traits that made the repayment of the loans possible.

The Suez Canal was a project that did not benefit Egypt; it was built for the profit of foreigners at the cost of Egypt. It was to be the pivot

of strategy for the European powers in the century to come. It also set in motion the denigration of Egypt, and it established a style: the English official who emerged as the ruler of Egypt, Evelyn Baring, whom history knows as Lord Cromer, was the quintessential "banker on horseback."

What happened in Egypt was paralleled by what happened in the Ottoman Empire, which, between 1854 and 1875, borrowed from European bankers a nominal amount of $900 million, of which it received only two-thirds, and it had to repay considerably more than the nominal amount, with interest charged at four or five times the customary amount for sovereign debt at the time. The same pattern probably would have been imposed on India by the British and on Algeria by the French, but in both of those lands, the "intermediate" step of driving the countries into bankruptcy was short-circuited—the imperial powers simply seized the countries outright. That is also what the Chinese and the Russians did in Central Asia. Bankers, even on horseback, were only one of the horsemen of imperialism.

CHAPTER 11

Sudanese Mahdiyah and the British Conquest

In the beginning of the sixteenth century, the northern Sudanese Funj sultanate converted to Islam and began to use the Arabic language. The sultanate was a militaristic state with a professional cavalry that was organized and equipped like a medieval European feudal force. The soldiers were primarily black slaves who had been recruited and trained along the lines of the Egyptian Mamluks. Profiting from its military power and the unity derived from the practice of Islam, the Funj remained independent until the beginning of the nineteenth century. It supported a vigorous religious educational system, as the great traveler John Lewis Burckhardt reported.[1] He was astonished to find, in the little town of Damer on the Nile, what amounted to a university for the study of Islamic law. In Muslim lands, education had always been driven by Islam, and Islam was sustained by educational institutions. Thus, as I will point out, it was students, known in Arabic and the Arabic-influenced languages as *taliban,* who empowered the Afghan insurgency. So it was in the Sudan. The fight for independence would be a religion-based struggle. It began in response to a slave drive.

In 1820, Mehmet Ali Pasha, the Albanian ruler of Egypt, decided to monopolize the market in African slaves and invaded the country. Having destroyed his own Mamluks, he wanted a new batch of slaves to serve as soldiers. Mehmet Ali did to the primitive army of the Funj sultanate what Napoleon had done to Egypt's Mamluks. Although his army was still in the process of being organized on a European scale, it easily overpowered the Funj warriors, who carried wooden swords and hippopotamus-hide shields and were clothed in coats of mail. The battles resembled the American Indian wars. But whereas the US cavalry had sought to exterminate the Native Americans, Mehmet Ali had a different objective. He wanted the Sudanese to live but serve as soldiers in his new army. In the traditional style, they would be slaves

like the Mamluks. So the military campaign quickly turned into a slave hunt. Like imperialists everywhere, Mehmet Ali found it cheaper to create an army of natives, even a Funj-style army of slaves, than to import troops. So, like European rulers in India, Java, Morocco, and elsewhere, he created a local military force, known as the *jihadiyah*.

Mehmet Ali's career marks a transition in imperialism. Though he shared Islam with the natives, he was a European. He found inspiration in both traditions. Like a number of later ambitious and pragmatic native rulers, he tried to copy foreign imperialists because he witnessed their success. Indeed, he was nearly killed by Napoleon's soldiers. So, having staked a claim on Egypt in 1805, after the French had left and the British were also withdrawing, he tried to copy practices he thought gave Europeans power, dressing his soldiers in European uniforms, having them taught European drill, and giving them European weapons. He did not wish to liberate Egypt. He was in no sense a nationalist, nor was he sympathetic to Egyptians. He merely sought to use them for his own aggrandizement—and safety. He had seen that those who lacked power soon were killed. So he built his army and began to develop the economy that would support it. Both of these requirements led him to the Sudan. In effect, he embarked on a policy toward the Sudan that was derivative of European imperialism.

What Mehmet Ali sought to do in the Sudan resembled what Napoleon had begun to do twenty years earlier in Egypt: he aimed to turn the Sudan into a modern, centralized, and profitable colony. He hoped to use the Sudan to guard the source of the Nile waters on which Egypt depended, and perhaps to provide a stepping-stone for an invasion of Christian and water-rich Ethiopia. His policy both toward Africa and toward the Asian provinces of the Ottoman Empire could not be carried out successfully because the European powers and their financiers overturned his attempt at modernization.[2] They were unwilling to allow any country in the global South to compete in the tournament of imperialism.

Under Mehmet Ali's grandson Ismail, the Egyptians began another push up the Nile in the 1860s and 1870s. But Ismail made a change in Mehmet Ali's program: he decided to suppress the slave trade. Why he did this is uncertain. Perhaps, having absorbed his grandfather's ambition to copy Western military power, he was attempting to go a step further and assimilate European values. Abolishing slavery had become a popular cause. Possibly he thought that he could win European approval by adopting it. Whatever his motive, he soon realized that he did not have the means. He knew that he could not count on his own corrupt officials or on avaricious Sudanese tribal leaders. They made too much money on the slave trade to allow it to

be abolished. So, ironically, to abolish slavery he fostered European imperialism. He thought—wrongly, as it turned out—that what he needed was not European soldiers but European administrators. In 1873, he hired five Europeans—three from England and two Americans—to conquer and administer the Sudan.[3] After a brief reliance on one of the more extraordinary of all the European visitors to Africa, Sir Samuel Baker, he fixed on another of the remarkable Englishmen who dominated the imperial world in the nineteenth century, General Charles Gordon.

Gordon, as Ismail perhaps did not know, was an ardent exponent of Christianity who looked on the native Muslims as pagans and was determined to stamp out their customs.[4] He ruled the Sudan with an iron hand. Sudanese anger built against him and Ismail's motley band of Egyptian, Turkish, Armenian, and Lebanese bureaucrats and Moroccan soldiers of fortune. While Ismail gave him free rein, fear dampened the ardor of those who were outraged by his proselytizing and his attacks on their vested interests, but when in 1879 the British forced Ismail from power in Egypt and Gordon resigned, the Sudan burst into flames.

Two years later, one of the natives who had grown to hate the imperial foreigners came to the fore. Muhammad Ahmad had seen that Gordon intended to destroy Islam, and, to counter Gordon and his Egyptian patrons, he reached back into Muslim legend and proclaimed himself the *Mahdi,* a man sent by God to rectify injustice and return the people to the sunnah.

Like many of the insurgents of the nineteenth century in Africa and Asia, Muhammad Ahmad was a Sufi. He was a follower of the Sammaniyah order (*tariq*), which had been introduced from the Arabian Hijaz and had become popular in the Sudan. As he carefully wove the separate lodges of the Sammaniyah into a movement, Muhammad Ahmad proclaimed his program to return Islam to its pristine state and to rid the Sudan of the foreign invaders. He voiced what many Sudanese wanted to hear, and he transformed the mutually hostile clans of Sudanese natives into a national force of armed zealots, more or less the Sudanese version of fedayeen. He called this force the Ansar.

By choosing the name Ansar, Muhammad Ahmad was casting his followers—and himself—in historical roles. The Ansar were the "Companions," the early supporters who assisted Muhammad's flight from Mecca and helped him create the first Islamic community in Madinah. As the leader of his Ansar, Muhammad Ahmad was putting himself in the position of the Prophet. It was a powerful combination, the very heart of the Muslim tradition, and soon he commanded a force of thirty thousand to forty thousand followers. He could do this,

he proclaimed, because he was the contemporary embodiment of Mahdism, the restoration of Islam.

As Peter Holt has written, the concept of a Mahdi, a divinely guided imam who knows esoteric secrets of the faith and whose appearance is associated with the approach of the end of the world, was familiar to the Sudanese before Muhammad Ahmad announced his mission.[5]

Indeed, Mahdiyah is a persistent theme in Islam. Over the centuries it has transcended geography and ethnic divisions to effect powerful changes throughout Africa and Asia. Men proclaiming themselves to be Mahdis have come forward a number of times throughout Islamic history and are embodied in the popular lore recounted by storytellers generation after generation. The substance if not the name can be seen in the eighth-century revolutionary movement led by Abu Muslim against the Umayyad caliphate, which I have described in Chapter 3. In the tenth century, the Berber Abdullah al-Mahdi Billah founded what became the Fatimid caliphate in Cairo. He took the title al-Mahdi in 909. Three centuries later another Berber, Muhammad ibn Tumart, founded the Almohad movement in what is today Morocco, proclaimed himself the Mahdi in 1212, and founded a dynasty that conquered Morocco and much of Spain in the thirteenth century. A number of other lesser-known figures took the title Mahdi elsewhere and over the following centuries, particularly in times of turmoil and danger, when it offered an esoteric explanation of events that seemed incomprehensible and proclaimed a vision of salvation.

As the orientalist D. B. MacDonald has written, it was

> in the hearts of the Muslim multitude that the faith in the Mahdi found its resting place and support. In the midst of growing darkness and uncertainty—political, social, moral, theological—they clung to the idea of a future deliverer and restorer and of a short millennium before the end . . . of the world. Men will become thoroughly secular, and Allah will leave them to themselves. The Kaaba [the building in the center of Mecca] will vanish, and the copies of the Quran will become blank paper, and its words will vanish, also, from the memories of men. They will think only of poems and songs. Then the end will come.[6]

So stated, the very concept of Mahdism was alien to the thinking of European statesmen of the time. It remains so today as we view movements like ISIS, but this is because most of us have forgotten Christian European history. Several messianic figures like the Mahdi had appeared in medieval Europe in times of stress or despair. Peter the Hermit was a key figure during the First Crusade, and Waldo of Lyon was a sort of European version of what Muhammad Ahmad thought himself to be.[7] Innumerable others popped up among the Protestant sects that proliferated in North America and on the fringes of Russian Orthodoxy. Such figures defy simple categorization: they

are at once unworldly and yet determined and unnaturally brave, and they wield an almost hypnotic hold on their followers. Within the community of Islam, we will meet others who, while not calling themselves Mahdi, thought of themselves as empowered to rectify human failings and to struggle against foreign invasion.

While the Sudanese Mahdiyah was anchored in otherworldliness, and xenophobia, it was quite open to using Western technology where it was useful. It acquired the best arms it could obtain from abroad with its limited resources and also set up small-scale factories to manufacture rifles and bullets. And it adopted what it could of the era's modern means of transportation, running, repairing, and building steam riverboats. The Ansar may have been the first native army to make extensive use of the telegraph.

While the telegraph, riverboats, and armories were important adjuncts, the real power of the Mahdiyah was its followers' dedication. The British army gained great respect for the Sudanese warriors, whom they called "dervishes." Zealots in the cause of Islam, they were one of the very few military forces that managed to break the British army square, the final defensive formation in European military tactics.

No sensible outsider would have bet that Muhammad Ahmad could create a powerful movement from scattered, illiterate, and poor tribal people. He had no strong tribal connections and was supported merely by a small, inexperienced band much like the Murids in the Caucasian insurgency. He was without adequate arms or financial resources and had no logistical base of support. At first, his weakness worked in his favor. Underestimation of the enemy is a common failure of the powerful. We have seen that the superpower of the eighth century, the Umayyad caliphate, failed to take seriously Abu Muslim's revolutionary forces; in the eighteenth century, the British could not believe that American colonists could prevail against the finest army in Europe; and the Russians in the 1980s were convinced that the scattered tribesmen of Afghanistan could not stand up to their powerful army. Similarly, the English and Egyptian officials in the Sudan scoffed at the pretensions of the self-proclaimed Mahdi. As they stood back, waiting for his unruly tribesmen, armed only with wooden weapons and protected only by leather shields, to disperse, Muhammad Ahmad was able to win his first small engagement. His followers and their neighbors saw the victory as a sign that God favored his cause. In response, angry villagers, nomads, and even tradesmen rushed to join his force. Other small victories followed. So electrifying were these small victories that some Sudanese members of the Egyptian army defected to the Mahdi with their weapons, and some of the still-pagan tribes began to support him. In 1884, the

British decided that the Sudan was not worth the cost of defeating him.

But then the Mahdi overplayed his hand: he proclaimed himself virtually the equal of the Prophet Muhammad, ready to turn small raids into a march of great armies. When General Gordon, recalled to the Sudan to apply his expertise, offered a deal to end the war, the Mahdi rejected it. Elated by success, his followers picked off one small post after another until Khartoum itself became isolated. Finally, the British government had to act—forced not so much by events in the Sudan, although they were certainly embarrassing, as by Gordon himself. Like some ambitious military commanders in our own time, Gordon entertained the English public with a powerful campaign of self-glorification. He created for himself the role of national hero and played it to the hilt. Reluctantly, because it saw no benefit to be gained in an expensive campaign in a far-off land, but swayed by his lobbying, the government organized a relief force to save Gordon and finish off the annoying Sudanese native chief.

The relief force arrived too late. The Mahdi's forces stormed Khartoum on January 26, 1885. They killed Gordon just the way he had often said he wanted to die, valiantly fighting with sword in hand in a hopeless battle. Two days later British forces arrived. Mission unaccomplished, the British wisely withdrew. But they had undeserved luck. Four months later, his kingdom come, the Mahdi died of typhus. His close friend and vigorous supporter Abdallahi was named caliph, but even that title could not give him sufficient authority to rekindle the jihad. Having lost its spiritual leader, the movement lost its élan, but, unchallenged, it survived for another fifteen years. Then the British decided to act. What impelled them was not a Sudanese threat—since that did not exist—but rather fear of the French, who were then pushing toward the Nile from their new colonial empire in West Africa.

To preempt the French, on April 8, 1898, an Anglo-Egyptian army under General Horatio Herbert Kitchener virtually annihilated the forces of the Mahdiyah at the Battle of Omdurman. The spirit of jihad died with the jihadis, and the Sudan faded into the British Empire. Kitchener, like Gordon before him, became a national hero in Britain, while the Mahdi would continue to hover in the recesses of Sudanese memory for a century and the idea of Mahdism, transformed by the pressures of statehood, would continue to shape Sudanese Islam even longer.

CHAPTER 12

Sanusiyah Imam Umar al-Mukhtar against Italian Genocide

A generation before the Mahdi proclaimed his mission in the Sudan, another Islamic revival movement was proclaimed in North Africa. It was founded by a Berber who had been born in what is now Algeria about 1790. Muhammad bin Ali al-Sanusi was a scholar who spent much of his early life studying in the libraries of Fez, Cairo, and Mecca. Although a scholar of Orthodox Islam, he was strongly influenced by Sufism. His personal aim was to push aside worldly concerns to devote himself to prayer. But in North Africa at that time, he could not. The French invasion of Algeria in 1830 blocked his return to his homeland and forced him to remain in Libya, where he created the Sanusiyah, a brotherhood of believers. As one close observer wrote of the order, it was influenced by Sufism and was in part mystical, but "the Grand Sanusi and his successors very strongly disapproved of external aids . . . such as processions, music, movements of the body inducing convulsions, piercing the flesh with sharp implements, and such other means as are used by some [mystical] Orders, and steered a middle course between the illuminative, or intuitive, school of Sufi writers and the rational or intellectual school . . . the chief aim of the Sanusiya being to make a man a good Muslim rather than a good mystic."[1]

Unlike the Muslim fundamentalists, the Sanusis, perhaps bowing to the custom of the bedouin of Cyrenaica, permitted the reverence of saints.[2] It was apparently a general practice to visit their graves and other sacred sites. We know from ancient observations that the nomads and oasis dwellers were practicing Muslims long before the arrival of the Sanusis.[3] While they were more apt to follow tribal customs than to obey Islamic laws, they accepted jihad as a continuation of tribal vendetta and raiding.

Realizing that a people ignorant of Islam could never be relied on to protect it, al-Sanusi sought to graft onto the society of nomadic

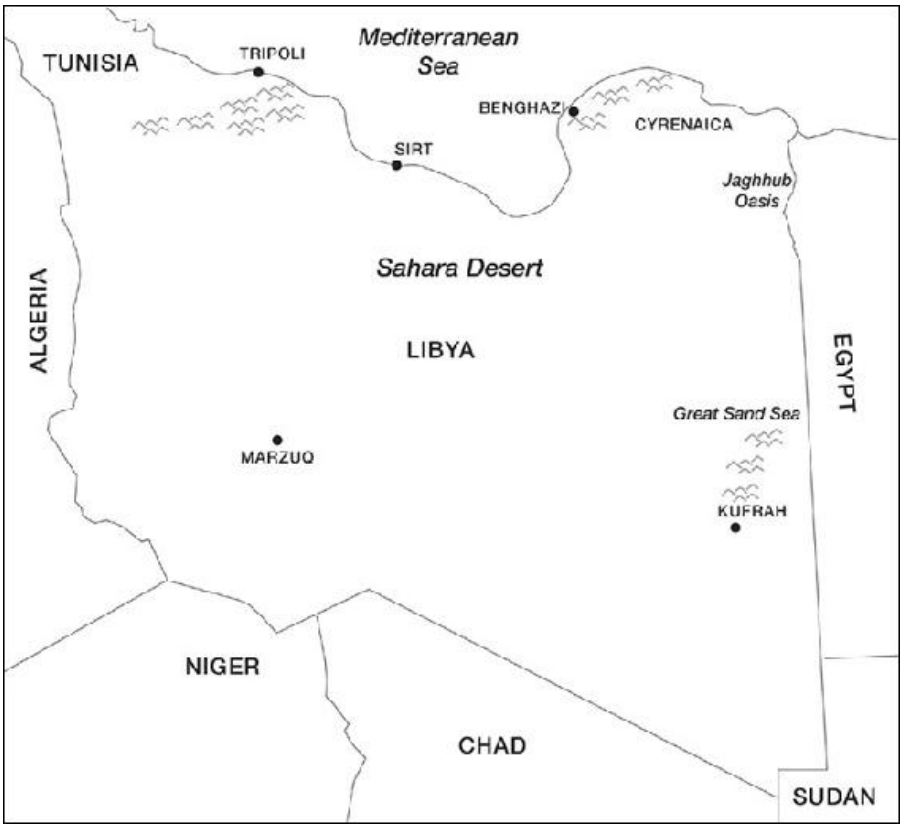
Sahara tribesmen who had partially submitted to Islam a brotherhood of true believers who would be their religious guides just as Imam Shamil had done in the Caucasus with his Murids and the Mahdi was to do in the Sudan with his *ansar*. They "stiffened," as guerrilla strategists say of special forces, the fighting capacity of the community and overcame the divisive turmoil of bedouin society. Al-Sanusi set about creating this brotherhood in the university he founded in an oasis deep in the Sahara. As the brotherhood grew, its missionaries founded scores of schools and community centers throughout the deserts and steppes of North Africa, all the way into the Arabian Hijaz. Some adherents even established outposts in Morocco, Turkey, and India. Others, inspired by the same values, would create similar outposts throughout Central Asia. The Sanusi Sufi order eventually covered an area larger than Europe. And that might have been nearly all one would have to say of the Sanusiyah, had it been left alone in the vast Sahara. But it was not.

After the conquest of Algeria, completed about 1860, the French moved deeper into Africa. Reaching a deal with the British to divide Africa between them—the 1898–1899 Anglo-French Partition Agreement was a classic act of imperialism—the French penetrated the area influenced by the Sanusiyah. Three years later, they destroyed the first of the order's lodges. As they advanced, they destroyed each lodge they encountered. Much worse was to come.

While the French were advancing from the south, a newly awakened and unified Italy had discovered nationalism and began to think of itself as Rome reborn. Rome was the inspiration, but France and Britain established the model: the Italians hoped to win status among their European neighbors by acquiring an empire. There was not much of the South that the other imperialists had not taken, but the least attractive parts of Africa, particularly the Libyan deserts, were still available. In 1911 the Italian government landed its first troops.

The Libya in which the Italians landed was legally part of the Ottoman Empire, but it was only tenuously connected to it. And it was divided geographically, ethnically, and socially. Most of the population lived in little ports scattered along the Mediterranean coast. They were mainly Arabic-speaking Muslims but were ethnically diverse. The sea had made travel relatively easy, and camel caravans regularly plied the inland trails from Morocco to Mecca. Berbers and Arabs from Tunisia and Algeria jostled shoulders with Turks who had been sent by the Ottoman government to protect and tax them; blacks from inner Africa performed most of the heavy work and made life easy; sizable communities of Jews handled much of the commerce; and a scattering of Europeans came as renegados (converts to Islam)

or adventurers. These groups were divided by language, religion, and ethnic origin into what were effectively villages within the city-states. Few if any appear to have been associated with the Sanusi or any other religious movement. Not until the mid-nineteenth century were any Sanusi groups established in the port towns.



The vast desert of North-Central Africa, where Arab and Berber nomads ranged. The northeast corner, Cyrenaica, was the center of the Sanusi brotherhood.

The nomadic tribes of Arabs and Berbers of the vast interior, socially and culturally distinct from the seacoast inhabitants, lived mainly off their herds, moving, as nomads must, with the seasons and chasing the occasional falls of rain, but also planting crops wherever oases made this possible. One area where there was a possibility of agriculture interested the Italians. They knew that their Roman ancestors had farmed the coastal plain of Cyrenaica, and they thought they could meet the needs of their growing population by colonizing it. It was there that they struck.

The Italian invasion of 1911 was not a grand campaign. The new generation of Sanusi leaders had little stomach for a fight. Fearful of Italian tactics and technology, they signed a treaty with the Italians in 1917. In return for his acquiescence, their leader, Idris (later king of

Libya), was recognized as the (puppet) ruler of Cyrenaica. But the Bedouin, organized by the Sanusi network of lodges and energized by the Sanusi creed, resisted. Cyrenaica was their homeland. They fought literally to the death to keep it.

Benito Mussolini's Italian Fascist regime hanged the Sanusi guerrilla leader, Imam Umar al-Mukhtar, on September 16, 1931, after he had been wounded and captiontured in battle. The Italian army gathered as many Libyans as it could to witness the execution, in the hope that the sight of their leader dead would also kill the resistance. Al-Mukhtar is regarded as the national hero of Libya, and streets are named after him in Tunisia, Egypt, Qatar, and Gaza.

The thirty years of war that resulted are today considered a classic example of insurgency and counterinsurgency. Led by a remarkable guerrilla leader and cleric, Umar al-Mukhtar (known as "the Lion of the Desert" in a sympathetic Hollywood movie), the bedouin hit and ran while the Italians bombed and chased them.[4] When military tactics failed, the Italians sought to create "furrows of blood" (Italian: *solci di sangria*) among the tribes by inciting them to fight one another. What the Italians called *politico-militari* tactics—tactics that Americans

largely copied—did not work because, as the Italian military commander wrote, “the entire population took part directly or indirectly in the rebellion.”[5]

When counterinsurgency failed, the Italians turned to genocide. Between 1911 and 1940 they killed nearly two-thirds of the population of Cyrenaica. They captured and hanged al-Mukhtar, closed or destroyed the Sanusi lodges, penned in the bedouin by building a barrier across their trade route to Egypt, and slaughtered their herds with aerial bombing and punitive raids.

The later Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi grew up hearing about these events and was deeply scarred by them. As one American journalist described the tales of Qaddafi’s childhood, “Folk literature of the North African desert recounts how some of the captured Libyans were dropped alive from airplanes. Water wells were plugged with concrete and stones. The Italians slaughtered herds of camels, sheep, and goats. Whole tribes, their livelihood thus ended, were herded into concentration camps in the desert. This savage behavior by the Italian military and the subsequent seizure, settlement, and colonization of Libya’s arable pasturelands have never been forgotten or forgiven by Libyans of Mokhtar’s generation, or Qaddafi’s.” [6]

CHAPTER 13

The Riff War and Abd al-Karim in Morocco

Hostilities between Christian Spaniards and North African Muslims, although sporadic and often interspersed with long periods of peaceful interchange, went on for hundreds of years. During most of that time the Spaniards, intent on achieving racial and religious "purity" (*limpieza de sangre*), moved down the Iberian Peninsula, winning battle after battle and taking town after town until finally, in 1492, they drove out most of the remaining Spanish Muslims and Jews. Five years later, they struck out across the Mediterranean to seize the Berber town of Melilla, which today is one of the few remaining outposts of European imperialism in Africa.

The Spaniards did not stop at Melilla but moved into other parts of "the Place Where the Sun Sets" (al-Maghrab), as Morocco is known in Arabic. In the early twentieth century, they established a "protectorate" in the Berber area of northern Morocco, while France took control of the center and south of the country. During the First World War, Spain did little to effect its control of the area, but in 1919 it took a more active role. Its troops began to move into the farming and grazing area of the Banu Waryaghal, the largest of the Berber tribes. Inevitably, relations between the Spanish and the Berbers grew worse.

Historians argue over how much of the tribesmen's growing anger was due to their learning of events in other parts of the Muslim world.[1] They surely heard of the tribal revolt against the British in Iraq and the uprising of Egyptians, mainly students, against the British in 1919 in Cairo. What we know is that Berber resentment of Spanish imperialism flared into open rebellion in July 1921. To the Spaniards' astonishment, the Banu Waryaghal routed their forces at the Battle of Annual. This success caused other Berber tribes to join with them in a confederacy to oppose further Spanish intrusions.

To understand how these traditionally hostile tribes came together,

we must consider the personality, thought, and evolution of one of the most remarkable and least understood statesmen of the modern Muslim world, Muhammad bin Abd al-Karim al-Khattabi.

Not surprisingly, opinions about Abd al-Karim vary with the observer. To some, he represented the "traditional manifestation of xenophobia and religious fanaticism,"[2] and to others he was just an opportunist seeking power.[3] On receiving a demand from Abd al-Karim not to invade Berber territory, the Spanish commander, General Fernández Silvestre, dismissed both the message and the sender as a bad joke. He shortly paid with his life. To the American journalist Vincent Sheean, who followed Abd al-Karim into combat, he was an unrecognized hero.[4] When I got to know him in the last years of his long exile, he was a grand old man from an almost forgotten era. I spent hours with him discussing his career. Naturally, my interpretation here will be shaped more by my own impressions than by those of others.[5]

Abd al-Karim was born in 1882 in the small coastal town of Ajia (Adjia in the French transliteration). His father was a *qadi* (judge) and a *shaikh* (respected elder) of the Banu Waryaghal tribe, so the members of his family were recognized as leading figures of the urban Berber community. As his father directed, Abd al-Karim attended a religious school, where he began his study of the Quran. He apparently had little contact with the Spaniards in his youth, but when he was fourteen, he moved with his family to the Spanish-occupied city of Tetuan. He told me that the experience gave him his "first glimpse of the behavior of soldiers of a colonial power in an alien land." [6] The stay in Tetuan was unpleasant enough to cause the family quickly to return to Ajia.

There, Abd al-Karim finished his studies in the local religious school. Upon graduation, he went to study at the venerable Islamic university of Qairawan, in Fez. The university had been founded in 859 and for centuries was one of the most important educational institutions in the world. Its students and professors included a galaxy of the leading scholars of the Middle Ages. In the 1890s, when Abd al-Karim studied there, it was still one of the most respected Islamic institutions. There the young man developed a deep knowledge of Islamic scholarship and a strong personal commitment to the faith. Upon graduation, having read Islamic law, he went to the Spanish-held town of Melilla, where he was appointed judge in a mixed court that tried cases between Spaniards and natives.

The mixed court, he soon found, was governed by double standards. As a Spanish official explained the basis of the court's rulings, "We are content to let murder go unpunished so long as it is just a matter of Riffis [Berbers] killing other Riffis."[7] But when a

Berber robbed, harmed, or killed a Spaniard, he was to be immediately imprisoned or executed. Although his views on Spanish justice became known, as far as I have been able to find out, Abd al-Karim took no overt part in anti-Spanish activities. Still, whatever he did caused him to be removed from the court and imprisoned.

The prison to which he was sent was a centuries-old Spanish fort. It must have been a terrible experience, and Abd al-Karim resolved to escape. His escape failed when he fell and broke his leg as he tried to let himself down by a rope from the ramparts. The Spaniards put him back in the dungeon but apparently did not consider him significant enough to execute. They did, however, try to use him as a foil against his father, whom they judged to be a leader of his people. When that ploy did not work, they allegedly (at least according to Abd al-Karim) had his father poisoned. Emotionally, that was the defining experience for the young Abd al-Karim; it also catapulted him into a leadership position among the tribesmen.

These events coincided with a severe drought, during which speculators squeezed the poorer Berbers while government officials withheld relief supplies. As Abd al-Karim remembered,

> Our land was parched; the tribe suffered from hunger. Yet just at that moment the Spanish decided to crush the last remains of our freedom. Resistance seemed absurd. Few against many, we had only the light arms of farmers and herdsmen. . . . To rally my people, I traveled day and night through the Riff villages, warning of our common danger. A Spanish delay had given me time; early in 1921 I was able to call a sort of national convention which, despite Spanish threats and bribes, decided to resist and appointed me the leader.

But resist with what? The villagers had no military equipment. So, Abd al-Karim told me, "we had to develop a source of supply. The Spanish army became our storehouse. With each battle our material increased, but after six months we still had only four captured cannon."

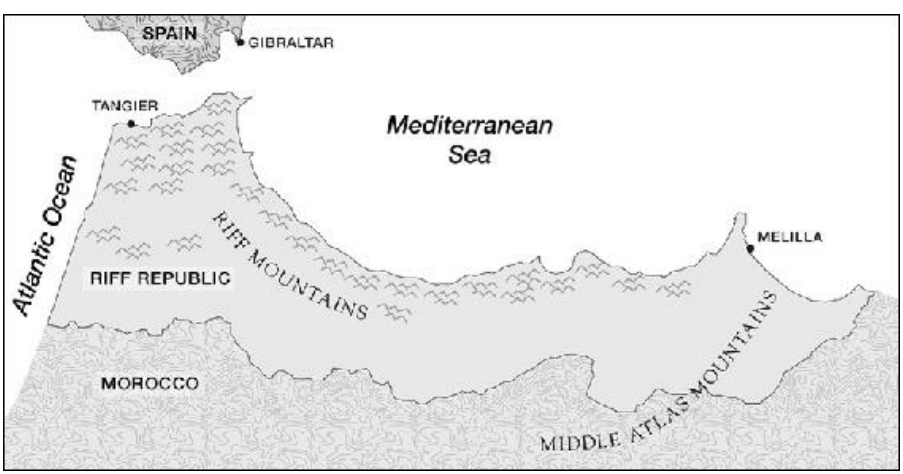
While the venerable Qairawan University may have inspired belief, it did not teach military tactics. So Abd al-Karim read what he could of "history's great generals." The essence of what he learned, he said, was that while numbers are important, they are often not decisive. With the bravery of naïveté, he warned the Spanish general who oversaw the Riff not to cross into what the convention had declared was the Tagduda n Arif, or Republic of the Riff. The Spanish were merely amused: What could a bunch of farmers and herdsmen do against a modern army armed with the latest equipment? They soon found out. When the Spanish troops crossed the line on July 22, 1921, as Abd al-Karim told me,

> with the handful of men I could gather on short notice, I waited for the Spanish troops at Annual Pass. I shall never forget how they looked, twenty-two thousand handsomely dressed troops marching in perfect parade order right into our midst. Quietly we lay in ambush; then, as someone in your war of independence said, when we saw 'the whites of their eyes,' we were upon them. In a few hours, those who could had fled, four thousand were captives —we had hardly enough men to guard them—and ten thousand lay dead before us. The proud Spanish general . . . committed suicide. A week later we were able to take the offensive.

At that point, Abd al-Karim made a major mistake. So elated was he, and so incited were his tribal forces by this victory, that a few months later they turned south to "liberate" Fez. But since Fez was in the French zone, this act pulled into battle the large, well-armed, and well-led French army. Those forces were far too powerful for Abd al-Karim's ill-armed tribesmen.

The French were then joined by a new Spanish army that also employed native troops—Fuerzas Regulares Indígenas, the Moroccan version of the British Indian sepoys—and their version of the Foreign Legion, the Tercio de Extranjeros. It was in Morocco that the young colonel Francisco Franco learned his trade. Most of these forces would later fight for Franco in the Spanish Civil War. They far outnumbered and vastly outgunned the Riffis (the Berber tribesmen).

As battle after battle occurred, each side became more adept at using what it had. Abd al-Karim became such a master of guerrilla warfare that Mao Zedong and Ho Chi-minh are said to have studied his tactics. But his opponents' resources gave them an advantage he could not match. As one student of aerial warfare has pointed out, in 1924



Following the expulsion of the Muslims and Jews from Spain in 1492, the Spanish continued their assault into North Africa. New measures of repression provoked a revolt in 1921 by the Berber Muslim villagers in the Riff Mountains, where the Spanish were defeated in a guerrilla war in 1926, but with French help they

overwhelmed the Riff rebels.

> the air-minded leader of Spain, Primo de Rivera, directed that the African Air Corps be concentrated so that it could undertake the systematic destruction of crops, markets, villages, and livestock; this . . . marked the beginning of a concentrated bombing campaign against the Riffi and to elaborate on its effectiveness, the Spanish took to using poison-gas bombs as well as the traditional fragmentation and incendiary weapons. Over nearly the next five months Spain dropped a total of 24,104 bombs on rebel communities and concentrations.[8]

Abd al-Karim was so stunned by the bombing that he tried to create an air force. He could not, but he did buy three outdated planes. They were soon shot down.

The sheer size of the European and European-led native armies and the combinations of forces employed, particularly by the French, soon proved overwhelming. The French Special Forces formation, known as the Groupe Mobile, was, for its time, a powerful strike force. In addition to nine battalions of French infantry, backed up by native troops, it could deploy armored cars and light tanks, which the Riffis did not have. As a French colonel noted, “The enemy is powerless to oppose them with any similar means of defense.”[9]

Spanish Special Forces soldiers, the Regulares, display decaptionitated heads of Riffians as trophies. These soldiers would usually cut off the heads of captiontives, parade them on bayonets, or carry them as souvenirs. They often placed piles of heads near villages to terrify the inhabitants.

The French tactics in Morocco foreshadowed those they would use twenty-five years later in Algeria, while the Riff guerrillas, like their Afghan counterparts, would learn how to fabricate simple but effective weapons. In this war one can see the sequence that led to the Taliban fight against the Americans: warriors fighting the British on the Northwest Frontier and Riff warriors in Morocco learned,

independently, I believe, to disassemble unexploded shells and bombs and turn them into improvised explosive devices (IEDs).[10]

Fight they could, but win they could not. As in Algeria, the Sudan, and Libya, the native fighters were starved, "wasted," and demoralized. Years of counterinsurgency destroyed their villages, poisoned their farmland, and killed their animals. Inevitably, the end came. Abd al-Karim realized that he could not defeat the French and Spanish armies and that more fighting would only destroy his people. He did not admit this, but he and his colleagues almost certainly also realized Islam was not strong enough to forge from a tribal society the national unity it would have taken to prosecute a successful guerrilla war. So, in September 1926, like Abd al-Qadir of Algeria and Imam Shamil of Chechnya half a century earlier, he surrendered. He commented to me, "As for myself, surrender naturally meant the loss of all my hopes. The pledge of freedom given me by the French was broken: I was seized and exiled with all my family to distant Réunion Island. All my property was confiscated. . . . I was able to escape to Egypt in 1947."

We can see the vast extent of the Muslim struggle against European domination by shifting our focus from the western anchor of the Muslim world on the Atlantic coast of Africa halfway around the globe to the Pacific. In what is today Indonesia, the people of an area about the size of the Riff were also fighting for their independence. They were the people of Aceh on the island of Sumatra.

CHAPTER 14

The Aceh War and Dutch Imperialism

Aceh is at the choke point of the narrow waterway, the Strait of Malacca, that connects the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Consequently, although the land area is small, mountainous, and covered in jungle, its position has given it outsize strategic and commercial importance. Its history is marked, above all, by its struggle to keep its independence and by the attempts of others, from the Portuguese in the sixteenth century to the Dutch in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to dominate it.

Until a century or so before Christopher Columbus sailed to the New World, the population of Aceh was either Hindu or pagan, but sometime around 1400 the ruling sultan was converted to Islam by seafaring Arab and Iranian merchants. About a century and a half later the Acehis would meet their first Europeans: the Portuguese. At the same time that the Spanish moved across the Atlantic, the Portuguese plunged into the Indian Ocean. Vasco da Gama, guided by an Arab navigator, landed in India five years after Columbus thought he had reached Japan.

Spices were the Portuguese sailors' goal. Europeans had developed a taste for nutmeg, mace, and cloves, and, lacking any way to preserve fresh meat, they found that pepper and other spices could disguise the taste of spoilage. In the primitive conditions of medieval Europe, spices suddenly became almost as eagerly sought as gold. But unlike sugar, introduced around the same time, spices could not be grown in Europe. They were produced in far-off, almost mythical, lands, carried by sailing dhows across the Indian Ocean, and passed from hand to hand along a torturous route, eventually to European consumers. This commerce, more than any other fact, explains the Portuguese drive to reach the Indies.

All European powers recognized the strategic importance of the Strait of Malacca, the passage from India and the Middle East to the Spice Islands, the Philippines, and China. It has been called “the southern or maritime Silk Road.” Aceh in Sumatra was the location of the first of the bitter wars fought against the Dutch in Southeast Asia.

No further incentive was needed, but the Portuguese had one. Like their Spanish cousins, they had been fighting the Moors for centuries. In 1497, they followed the Spanish in expelling their Muslims and Jews and had declared a virtual war against Islam. They did not care much what religion was followed by the Africans they seized as slaves to work their sugar plantations—some were Muslims, but most followed primitive religions. When they managed to sail around the southern tip of Africa into the Indian Ocean, they found their Muslim enemy in every port they visited. So when they established their bases at Calicut and Goa, they attacked the rulers of sultanates, city-states, or port towns along the Indian coast and in Ceylon, and then moved

farther east to Indonesia.

Meanwhile, one of the first known sultans of Aceh, Ali Mughayat Syah, was engaged in campaigns to control the waterways and ports across the strait on the Malay Peninsula. He wanted to use his control of the strait to get a share of the profit from the flow of spices from the islands farther to the east. Inevitably, he clashed with the Portuguese. The prize over which they fought was the port city of Malacca, which the Portuguese had conquered in 1511 and from which Sultan Ali wanted to evict them. To do this, he turned to his fellow Muslim, the Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent, to whom he appealed as the caliph of Islam. Both Ali and the sultan wanted to control the area, and both saw military cooperation as the way to clear out the Portuguese. As this was in the more leisurely days of sailing ships, it was not until 1539 that the Ottoman fleet arrived. It tipped the balance of power in the strait by bringing the weapon for which the Ottomans were most famous, the cannon. But since it was so difficult to carry military supplies all the way from Anatolia to Sumatra, they set up what must have been one of the world's first military assistance training programs: they taught the Acehis how to forge cannon for themselves. Inadvertently, they started an arms race, as all the sultanates of Southeast Asia began to forge their own cannon and muskets.

Memory of the Aceh relationship with the Ottoman Empire long outlasted the Portuguese attack. When the Dutch began to replace the Portuguese in the seventeenth century, Aceh tried to invoke treaties that would protect it as an Ottoman province. It was too late. The Dutch were pouring into the area and the Ottoman government was fighting closer at home for its life. It is true that the Dutch had to struggle with the British for almost two centuries, but that struggle was more a European than an Asian contest. It was finally resolved by a deal with Great Britain, the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1871, in which the two powers agreed on a swap. The Dutch turned over to Britain their position on the African Gold Coast, and Britain allowed the Dutch a free hand to do as they liked in the archipelago that ultimately became Indonesia. Aceh was the doorway.

Meanwhile, Aceh was controlling the sale of more than half of the world's pepper, then an enormously valuable product. To overwhelm Aceh and take over the spice trade, Dutch merchants had formed in 1602 one of those grand imperial and commercial companies, the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (Dutch East India Company), the grandfather of today's multinational corporations. As a proportion of the world economy, it would dwarf those we know today. It was in its time among the most formidable forces in international affairs, more powerful than most European states and initially far larger and more

formidable than the British company that conquered India.

As a virtual nation-state, the Dutch East India Company was authorized by Dutch law to wage war, make treaties, and found colonies. As the epitome of the global North, it could bring enormous power to bear on the South. Having been pushed out of India by the British, the Dutch were determined to take and control what the British were also assumed to lust after, "their" Indonesia.

The Dutch in Indonesia, like the British in India, realized that arms were necessary but not sufficient to power imperialism. If the huge commercial companies did not support themselves, the governments that were their part owners and patrons would abolish them. So, like the British in Bengal, the Dutch in the Moluccas or Spice Islands set about controlling both price and production. As the contemporary economist Adam Smith observed,

> The best way, they imagine, to secure their own monopoly, is to take care that no more shall grow than what they themselves carry to market. By different arts of oppression they have reduced the population of several of the Moluccas nearly to the number which is sufficient to supply with fresh provisions and other necessaries of life their own insignificant garrisons, and such of their ships as occasionally come there for a cargo of spices. . . . The English company have not yet had time to establish in Bengal so perfectly destructive a system. . . . In the course of a century or two, the policy of the English company would in this manner have probably proved as completely destructive as that of the Dutch.[1]

As we have seen, it did. No European was concerned with the thoughts of the natives. Had they listened, they would have heard many voices. The Indonesians were divided into scores or even hundreds of petty states, sultanates, port towns, and tribes, none of which spoke for any other. To European merchants, soldiers, and administrators, they were individually unimportant. Moreover, since most of them were Muslim, they were beyond the pale of civilization. They were assumed to be bloodthirsty savages, ever ready to rape or kill Europeans. Many were pirates like the Algerian corsairs. Few Europeans cared to remember that in the immediate past, they and the Americans had also combined commerce with piracy when the opportunity arose. The Dutch, like the British, French, and Russians, thought they had not only the right but also the obligation to pacify the unenlightened people and exploit their unexploited resources. For the Dutch toward the end of the nineteenth century, all these issues came to focus on Aceh.

The Dutch invaded Aceh in 1873 with the confident assumption that the natives would be unable to resist. But resist they did, just as the peoples of Algeria and the Caucasus had done and the Libyans and Moroccans would do. Consequently, the invasion led to a full-scale,

mainly guerrilla war, known to the Dutch as the Aceh War and to the Indonesians as the Infidel (*kafir*) War. It lasted over thirty years, from 1873 until the First World War and then, in sporadic insurgencies, until the Second World War. It would be echoed, as attempts at regime change have recurred, in insurgencies, terrorism, and chaos in our times.

What to do about the expensive chaos the Dutch government and its colonial officials had created became a major political issue in Holland—just as the American policies in Vietnam would blow back into American domestic politics. Begun in hopes of enrichment, the Aceh War instead came close to bankrupting Holland. In desperation, the Dutch tried every form of counterinsurgency. The first attempt was to bombard the capital and occupy the lowlands along the coast. The Acehis suffered but began to build and modernize their own armed forces. With the Ottoman Empire no longer able to help, they turned to (and were rebuffed by) the English, the French, and the Italians. Had they known the stories I have told in this book, they would not have bothered. But they somehow managed to acquire enough military equipment, mainly from dead Dutch soldiers, to confine the Dutch to a narrow region along the coast.

After losing their capital city, the Acehis retreated to the mountainous interior. What the Dutch hoped would happen did. Some Acehis became dispirited, and as the Dutch-imposed blockade cut off their access to imported food, some of the semiautonomous chiefs tried to accommodate. The Dutch flattered them by creating a puppet government in which they could participate, but they were a weak reed on which to lean. Whenever the Dutch relaxed their military pressure, the chiefs switched sides.

With offense proving inconclusive and expensive, the Dutch adopted the strategy the British had long before adopted in Ireland. Just as the British had pulled back behind a wall, the Pale, which surrounded Dublin, so the Dutch pulled back into a walled area around the former capital, Banda. What was “beyond the pale” would be left to the “savages.” But wall building did not work. To survive, Banda needed the interior, and the Acehis made access dangerous. As they became more efficient in their insurgency, they found a new form of leadership, the Muslim religious leaders, the ulamah.

The ulamah then did what the Dutch should have anticipated. They declared that the war against the Dutch was a jihad, and, using the same vocabulary as Muslim warriors today, their followers became jihadis, “tenacious bands of peasants who were connected to one another through Islamic brotherhood first and foremost.”[2]

The Dutch responded with an even more savage counterinsurgency. In the early 1890s, they augmented their Dutch military force with

native troops from other minority groups and areas distant from Aceh. They could do this because of the diversity of the islands. The inhabitants of other islands did not think of the Acehs of Sumatra as allies or kinsmen, and many of them were converts to Christianity.[3] Under Dutch leadership, they willingly razed dozens of villages and massacred thousands of natives. Over the course of the war, according to the historian J. I. Hans Bakker, "tens of thousands of Achenese guerrila [*sic*] fighters, at least 30,000, and very likely as many as 100,000, died in battle or as a result of diseases like cholera and malaria." [4]

Still, victory eluded the Dutch. In desperation, as costs mounted and the home government grew impatient, the Dutch army commander turned to a famous Dutch orientalist for advice. Professor Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje had a considerable reputation as a scholar in Arabic, Malay, Javanese, and Acehnese; he had written hundreds of scholarly papers and even, pretending to be a Muslim, visited Mecca to write an unusual book on that city. Much of his career was in subterfuge: When he went to Aceh in the midst of the war there, he also pretended to be a Muslim, using the name Hajji Abdul Ghaffar.[5] Then, after winning the confidence of the Muslim leaders, he used the knowledge he had gained to design a brutal counterinsurgency. He urged the use of covert operations, propaganda, and the killing of the ulamah, whom he identified as the leaders of the insurgency. His activities were kept secret for half a century. Many other self-proclaimed "experts," and some real scholars on native movements, would follow in his footsteps. He is one of the reasons why Muslims are often suspicious of orientalists.[6]

As in Algeria, there was a woman guerrilla leader in Aceh. Cut Nyak Dhien (aka Tjoet Nja Dhien) is an Indonesian national hero who appears on postage stamps and is the subject of a film. But her fate was tragic. After twenty-five years of fighting the Dutch, she refused to surrender until, starving, blind, and suffering from malaria, she was turned in to the Dutch by a supposed friend.

The costs could be airbrushed, as a smiling Cut Nyak Dhien on an Indonesian 10,000-rupiah banknote, but the real-life scars were not healed. We see them today all over the South. Though the war killed many people, the issues it posed were not resolved. They continued to fester until the Japanese invasion in 1942 overthrew the Dutch colonial regime. But the events in Aceh also demonstrated, and the insurgencies of the Muslims in Algeria, Morocco, Libya, India, and the Sudan had shown, that while Islam may have been a necessary component of the resistance, it was in itself incapable of stopping imperialism. The European powers were too strong, and Islam as then practiced could not mobilize its adherents for a sufficiently long-term,

violent, and costly counterattack. Some Muslims came to believe that Islam had to be revitalized or defense of the civilization would fail. In Aceh, as in Morocco, the Caucasus, India, and elsewhere, Muslims sought guidance. They exchanged papers, read mimeographed or handwritten reports or broadsheets, gathered in coffeehouses, and listened to sermons in mosques. There was a hunger for both information and interpretation. Advancing to meet this need was one of the most remarkable men of the nineteenth century, not a warrior, like most of the individuals I have discussed, but rather an intellectual. It is to Jamal al-Din al-Afghani that I now turn.

CHAPTER 15

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and the Muslim Awakening

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani was by far the most influential Muslim thinker of the nineteenth century. He was also a much more worldly figure than the leaders of the revival and independence movements I have discussed. He did not take up arms or create an insurgency, but he inspired several of those who did. He was seen as a subversive figure by the leaders of the major Islamic states. He met several of them; indeed, in his travels, he seems to have talked to nearly every important actor in the Middle East. Inevitably, he was controversial.

The controversy began with the attachment (*laqab*) to his name, which usually designates where a person comes from. (In this style, I would be called William Polk Texan.) This practice has been continued: the clandestine warriors of al-Qaida and the Islamic State have adopted noms de guerre that identify (sometimes deliberately wrongly) their place of origin. Thus the leader of the Islamic State styled himself Abu Bakr "al-Baghdadi," the man from Baghdad.

Jamal al-Din's laqab was "al-Afghani," although he was born in Iran —just as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi actually came from Samarra. The two men misrepresented their birthplaces for different reasons: Abu Bakr was keen to avoid being identified and perhaps assassinated. Jamal al-Din had more complicated motives. The usual explanation, which I think is correct, is that he wanted to be thought of as a Sunni Muslim (like the ruling ethnic group of Afghanistan) rather than as a Shii (as most Iranians were). That is, he wanted to put himself into the mainstream of Islam rather than what most Muslims in his time would have considered a deviant or peripheral sect. He certainly accomplished this, as his career took him throughout the Muslim world, from Afghanistan to Egypt and from Istanbul to India.

Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, pictured here in about 1882, was the political “missionary” of the nineteenth-century Muslim world. He sounded the anti-imperialist call from Afghanistan to Egypt, and generations of Muslims from Java to Morocco have been influenced by his writing.

Judging his activities, we would not be wrong to think of Afghani as an Islamic version of one of the great European revolutionaries, a Mikhail Bakunin, Aleksandr Herzen, or Giuseppe Mazzini. Like them, he spent his life trying to awaken his contemporaries and give shape to their discontentment. He preached his doctrine in Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, Bukhara, India, and Iran. Unlike the European radicals, he thought, at least initially, that he could go directly to the native rulers—the amir of Afghanistan, the shah of Iran, and the sultan of Turkey—to persuade them to lead an anti-Western movement. He failed. The native rulers he approached were quite content to sup at the British table or, when they managed to evade British control, at the Russian table. And they were more intent on enjoying the fruits of kingship than espousing causes. But Afghani’s status gave him access to them.

As far as is known, his family was part of the religious elite. He used the title *sayyid* (nobleman, descendant of the Prophet) and wore the black turban to signify his relationship to Muhammad. At the same time, he hid his Iranian origins and as much as he could of his youth. What we know of his life story is full of long gaps, so the following is only approximate.

Since we have no indication of a school, Afghani apparently was educated at home and perhaps went to one or more of the Iraqi Shiah cities for more formal religious studies. Somehow, whether in Najaf, Khademain, or elsewhere, he acquired an impressive knowledge of the Arabic language, Islamic law, and philosophy. These were the core syllabus of Islamic scholarship, and he would later lecture on them. He flaunted his knowledge of those subjects but concealed where he had acquired it.

The first more or less firm date we have for his life is about 1855, when he turned up in India. Even then, he is shrouded in mystery. Apparently he had already decided to adopt an Afghan or Turkic persona, and he reportedly affected Central Asian Turkish dress. That was not a good disguise. India's British rulers already employed an always sensitive, even paranoid, security force that tended to see Russian agents lurking in every corner. And since his stay overlapped with the sepoy rebellion, he was regarded with suspicion as a Muslim firebrand. If he were as intent on hiding as he is thought to have been, he should have chosen different dress. That he did not suggests that he did not want to hide but only wanted to disguise his Iranian, presumably Shiah, background. As far as is known, he spent four years in India.

Exactly what he did there is not known in detail, but at the end of his Indian years he appears to have made the hajj to Mecca. From there he is believed to have traveled through Syria, Iraq, and Iran to Afghanistan. The sources are often contradictory, but it appears he was received and even employed by the Afghan ruler Dost Muhammad Khan, after whose death in 1863 he left or was forced to leave the country. Somehow he made his way to Egypt, where he stayed long enough to join a Masonic lodge and meet some of the younger Muslim clerics, including the man who would become his most important collaborator, Muhammad Abduh. Then he traveled on, allegedly to Istanbul, before returning to Egypt in 1871. It was there that he dropped anchor. He remained in Cairo, lecturing to young religious students at his house and at the Azhar University mosque, for the next eight years.

What was he up to during these years that made him think it was necessary to disguise himself? The answer takes us to the heart of political-religious activities during that time.

The British had run roughshod over the country he claimed as his birthplace, Afghanistan. Shortly after he was born, the British had conquered the southern part of the country; driven out, they had returned and conducted a punitive mission. Meanwhile, the Russians were pressing down on the northern area. In Algeria, the Muslim insurgency that had been led by Abd al-Qadir was fighting a rearguard action against the French army and European colonists. During his stay in India, Afghani would have learned all about the suppression of the sepoys; the destruction of the Mughal Empire, once one of the greatest Muslim states; and the incorporation of India into the British Empire. During his travels he must have heard often of the Russian suppression of Imam Shamil's Islamic movement in the Caucasus and the expulsion of virtually the whole nation of Chechens and a large fraction of the Crimean Tatars. In Central Asia, the Qing dynasty was overthrowing the Uyghur khanates, and in Sumatra, the Dutch were engaged in a war that would destroy the country's independence movement and kill a hundred thousand Muslims. When he arrived in Egypt, the young people with whom he became close were involved in the failed attempt of the leaders of the Egyptian army to break British control of the Egyptian ruler. In short, everywhere an informed Muslim looked, his world seemed to be falling apart under the blows of British, French, Dutch, Russian, and Chinese imperialists.

One cannot know for certain the motivations, fears, and hopes of anyone, much less a figure like Afghani. Probably his feelings changed as events unfolded and as opportunities arose. But my hunch is that he felt he could not afford to have his message misread or devalued, as it might have been if he were considered an Iranian Shii. He required a sort of disguise if he was to accomplish his mission.

That mission focused on convincing all intelligent Muslims that they must deal with two fundamental and interlocking challenges: how to achieve independence so that they would be free to return to the fundaments of Islam, and how to become good Muslims so that they would be strong enough to become and remain independent.[1]

I suspect he was not sure which of these issues could be addressed first. It would have been sensible to arrange them according to his audience: with Muslim clerics he would have put a priority on ensuring proper understanding and practice of Islam, while with rulers he would have stressed policies to achieve greater independence. As far as we know, this was his procedure. As I reflect on what is known and generally agreed on regarding his life and thought, I find that he employed three sets of tactics to deal with the junction of Islam and independence.

The first part of his tactical program was to appear to be a true ally, and to convince everyone with whom he dealt that he was. Doing so

required that he be seen as an orthodox religious figure. That is why, as I have said, he took the laqab "al-Afghani." But using that designation, as well as others linking him to Ottoman Turkey, would not have fooled many of the Muslims with whom he dealt if he had also not shown in his lecturing and writing a mastery of the huge corpus of Islamic lore. Those who gathered around him, who were themselves regarded as among the best and the brightest of contemporary Muslim thinkers, thought of themselves as his students. They gave every indication of fully accepting him.

The second tactic was to create a platform for his message. In Egypt, he ran a continuing seminar or lecture series. Probably the group usually met at the Azhar University mosque, where it was the custom for lecturers to take a position and address freely all who wished to listen; he also took the group into his house, where he ran a sort of salon.[2] One of the most sensitive students of Muslim thought of the period, Albert Hourani, wrote that Afghani taught young Egyptians "theology, jurisprudence, mysticism and philosophy"—that is, the standard range of subjects for a lecturer in the university mosque. "But he taught them much else besides: the danger of European intervention, the need for national unity to resist it, the need for a broader unity of the Islamic peoples and the need for a constitution to limit the ruler's power."[3]

How much Afghani knew about or was in contact with discussion groups outside Egypt is not known, but he certainly realized that, isolated from one another, Muslims could not do what he thought needed to be done. The only way his program could be effected, he believed, was if it covered the whole Muslim world. Thus he needed a different means of disseminating his ideas. In his 1881 collection of essays *Refutation of the Materialists* (*Al-Radd ala al-Dahriyyin*), he sought to lay out his thoughts and prove his credentials as a Muslim thinker. This book was influential but had a limited circulation. To reach a wider public, he required a different form of communication. In his lifetime, that was beginning to be supplied by the advent of Arabic and Turkish newspapers.

Afghani must have noticed the growing popularity or circulation of the newspapers then being established in Cairo, Beirut, and Istanbul. But they were not contributing to his objective. True, they were reaching a far larger audience, but they carried only entertainment and news. It was not news he sought to convey, but guidance. And the audience he wanted to reach was not restricted to Egypt; a Cairo newspaper would not reach disaffected or dispirited Muslims caught in the tragic events occurring in Indonesia, Bukhara, or Tunisia. He needed some base that would give him the freedom to write and also disseminate his writings. No place in the Muslim world was suitable,

he decided, or perhaps even possible. He would have been immediately banned or arrested in Egypt, British India, or Iran. So he and an acolyte, the Egyptian cleric Abduh, went to Paris, where they founded a sort of "newspaper"—somewhat similar to the broadsheets being published just before the America Revolution—to carry his advice and opinions to small discussion clubs all over the Muslim world, where they were avidly read.

The third tactic Afghani employed was to try to convince the powerful figures of his time to struggle for true independence. He went straight to the top, carrying his message to the sultan-caliph of the Ottoman Empire, the shah of Iran, and the amir of Afghanistan. He sought audiences with them and their advisers whenever he could. These attempts, which led some critics to accuse him of opportunism, were a complete failure. The rulers of that time, like those in many Muslim states today, thought that to survive they had to accommodate the superpowers. Even those who were secretly opposed to the imperialists were quite prepared to work with them to protect the attributes of rule. They rightly saw that what Afghani urged them to do would probably end their reigns, and possibly their lives.

Surely Afghani realized where his program led. He could have had no doubt about the way rulers viewed it. He was thrown out of Afghanistan, Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, and even Iran. He might have achieved his aim more quickly if he could have persuaded any of their governments to take up the cause, but he could not; and, having failed with the rulers, he had to try to energize the people. The people did not include the illiterate and impoverished masses. He was not a romantic socialist. Nor could he have aimed his message at the "workers of the world," the group favored by Karl Marx, because one result of imperialism was that there were very few industrial workers left in the global South. In default of a better audience, he tried to reach the group the Marxists most distrusted and disliked, the intelligentsia.

To the intelligentsia, his message was simple: Muslims must get back to the origins of their religion if they hoped to free their lands from imperialism. They must reinvigorate themselves to perform this task because no foreigner would help them. They had the capacity to do it. Their ancestors had demonstrated that Islam was a powerful means of action. It was not Islam but disunity that was the source of their current weakness. As Hourani wrote of his message, it was "to persuade Muslims to understand their religion aright and live in accordance with its teaching. If they did so, he believed, their countries would of necessity be strong." [4]

The audience that read this message best was the Egyptians, and of them, the foremost was his student and sometime collaborator

Abduh.[5]

Although Abduh would later become eminently respectable as the rector of Azhar University, which was the heart of Islamic scholarship, and the chief judge of the Egyptian Islamic court system, he and Afghani in the 1880s and 1890s were barely tolerated outsiders. They oscillated between audiences at court and exile.

During their time together in Egypt, in 1882, the Egyptian army revolted, more or less in the direction Afghani had advocated, although not with the means he preferred. The leader of the revolt, the Egyptian officer Ahmad Arabi, had strong personal reasons to act. But regardless of his motivation, the revolt was a turning point in Egyptian nationhood. Ultimately Arabi would be seen as a patriot, indeed a national hero, but at the time, no one was much interested in him, and few Egyptians espoused the idea of real independence. The Egyptian army's defeat ultimately solidified imperialism in Egypt: the victorious British had no intention of allowing the rebels to promote nationalism. Afghani was sent out of Egypt, and Abduh was sent into internal exile in his village.

After a lengthy series of moves, Afghani and Abduh met in Paris, and from there they reached their true audience, the intellectual elite of the Muslim world. In 1884 they founded a short-lived but immensely influential journal, *Al-Urwa al-Wuthqa.*[6] Its message was that both European domination and oriental despotism must be ended, and the way to do it was to reinvigorate Islam and establish it as the ruling doctrine.

What they did together with their journal, Abduh continued to do more quietly on his return to Egypt, teaching small groups of students to think of Islam as a dynamic system, open to change and always meaningful in its guidance on contemporary problems. His concern with imperialism, which never matched Afghani's in intensity or scope, faded in the years after his return to Cairo in 1888. He befriended the British rulers of Egypt and accepted government appointments. But his belief in the power of Islam, properly understood as he defined it, never weakened, and it was this belief that he passed on to his students.

One of his better-known students, the Syrian Rashid Rida, followed him in addressing the central question posed by critics of Abduh and unbelievers: "Is it possible to restore the glory of the East through the strength of Islam?" Rida's answer was "Yes! A thousand times yes!"[7] The key, he argued, was to go back to primitive Islam before it was blemished and weakened by innovations. To do that, intelligent Muslims needed to dig into the Arabic language, which itself, like Islam, was invaded by foreign words and diminished by the loss of original meanings. Since Arabic was the original language in which

God delivered his message, to understand that message, one must immerse oneself deeply in the medium.

Like Abduh and Afghani, Rida founded a journal to spread his ideas. Afghani and Abduh had proved the power of little journals. They were cheap to print and were passed around by readers, so that each copy might find its way into a dozen or more hands. In this way they reached people who were hungry for ideas throughout the Muslim world. We can trace Afghani's influence from Tunis in the West to Bukhara in Central Asia.[8]

And Afghani and Abduh were flattered by imitators. At roughly the same time that they were holding forth, Tatar and Turkish intellectuals in and around Bukhara and in the Crimea began a similar mission. The most significant of these men was Ismail Bey Gasprinskii, who in 1883 also founded a journal, *Terjüman* (Turkic for "translator"), which was read throughout the Ottoman Empire, Russia, and India.[9] Published in the Ottoman Turkish of Istanbul rather than in the Turkic dialect, it was read all over the East. Its message was the slogan, "*Dilde, Firurde, Ishte Birlik*" (Unity, language, thought, work). It was said to be "for a generation the only unofficial Muslim newspaper in the Russian empire of any consequence."[10]

These journals and innumerable broadsheets provided a running critique of what many peoples of the Muslim world had come to see as the source of their weakness: an ossified Muslim clergy and corrupt native puppet rulers who were unable to halt, and often actually abetted, the advance of imperialists.

Looking back on these men and their movements, we see a universal pattern of failure. The question that would haunt subsequent generations was why.

One obvious answer was that the global North was simply too strong for the South. Everywhere, Muslims who struggled for independence were overwhelmed by military power. The march of Northern armies into the South was both unstoppable and universal—France into Algeria in the 1830s; Britain into India from the late eighteenth century until it made India into a part of the British Empire in 1858; Russia into Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Crimea in the 1850s and 1860s; and China into the khanates of the Tarim Basin and the Uyghur state in the 1860s. Still, astute Muslims realized that military intrusion was a necessary but not sufficient explanation for defeat. Military force was only a part of the avalanche that buried the South. There were more implements in the Northern toolkit.

The first and in some ways most effective tool of imperialism was commercial power. The North produced better things at lower cost, and these were eagerly snapped up by natives. Traditional industries were forced out of business. These trends began in the Levant in the

1830s, spread across Africa and Asia, and intensified in later years as European bankers seduced governments with loans they could not repay. (We see similar actions throughout Latin America at roughly the same time, and in Greece today.) Egypt, Iran, and the Ottoman Empire were loaned into bankruptcy. State bankruptcy itself was virtually a new concept. For their own wasteful lifestyles, rulers had always been able to trim their "sheep," as Ottoman sultans referred to their subjects. But they could not squeeze out enough to pay for the grand projects, epitomized by the Suez Canal, that European bankers enticed them into undertaking in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Less obvious was the imperialist nations' intellectual power. I have mentioned my observation of a conference of leading Arab intellectuals who were best able to express their ideas and perceptions in European languages and thought patterns. The intellectual bridge between North and South often ran in only one direction. In the early years of the twentieth century, large numbers of works published in Russian, German, French, and English began to appear in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian translation—not only in such sophisticated cities as Delhi, Cairo, and Istanbul but even in remote Tashkent and Samarqand.[11] To this day, the translation of scholarly as well as popular works from Arabic, Turkish, Urdu, and other Eastern languages into French or English is spotty at best.

Finally, there was the power of organization. Westerners understood how to work together to accomplish shared goals in ways that were alien to the Muslims. Muslim societies were often fractured, separated by fault lines that isolated tribes, villages, whole provinces, and ultimately the competing rulers of states and empires. At every level, natives could be induced to help the imperialists conquer them. Islam as it was practiced and understood was not only incapable of crystallizing any effective resistance; it was increasingly considered by Muslims to be irrelevant. The advance of the North was considered to be an unstoppable avalanche. Even if it was thought to be exploitive or destructive, governments, merchants, the general public, and even the ulamah accommodated to it. From India, the great poet Muhammad Iqbal decried the attack of imperialism on the peoples of "the South of the Earth" as "hideous and evil, not only for the exploited but to all the world."[12] He wrote of the imperialist,

> Humankind are the caravan and he the brigand.
> In his self-delusion and ignorance
> He calls pillage by the name of empire.[13]

Throughout the Muslim world, disaffected leaders recognized the

need to find another framework into which to fit their resistance. The framework on which they built their hopes was nationalism. It is to this new mode of thought that I now turn.

PART THREE

The Shift to Secular Nationalism

Gradually and at different times, beginning in the late nineteenth century, individuals and groups of concerned people from all over the Muslim world came to realize that simply being a Muslim or even organizing defense with other Muslims did not stop the European invasions. The North was absolutely strong, and the South was disproportionately weak. Since it had been Islam that provided the ideology for the resistance movements, some Muslims ascribed to Islam itself the blame for failure. Whether or not Islam was responsible, it did not appear to offer a solution. So, some thinkers and activists began to look toward Europe in quest for the "secret" of Northern power and the key to understanding the causes of the imbalance between the North and the South.

Their quest was the quest of the blind. Until at least the middle of the nineteenth century, Muslims had no vision of the North. For centuries they had looked inward. Muslim societies were fragmented, their intellectual powers had been diverted, vested interests in their leadership had kept most of the people in ignorance, a religious bureaucracy dominated their educational institutions, and few knew any broadly shared language other than Arabic, Farsi, or Ottoman Turkish. These barriers would take generations to overcome. The North was an alien world. And suddenly it was upon them.

Military failures followed one after the other. Governments were overturned or declared bankrupt, and individual citizens were caught in disorienting change. Men put aside the turban and donned the fez (made in France) in the name of "efficiency," and they ate from plates (imported from Austria) while, for the first time, they sat on chairs (brought from England) instead of rugs. It came to be thought of as backward instead of conservative to do things in the old way. Two words took on new meanings. The word for "new"—*jadid*—no longer implied reprehensible innovation but rather conveyed growth and intelligence. And the word for "change"—*ghaiyara*—which had meant "to go bad" or "to curdle as in milk," now defined what intelligent

people should do to achieve strength and dignity. In dozens of small ways, the old was put aside for the new and demand for preservation was replaced by recognition of the need for change. But the pace and the range of these transformations threatened to overwhelm society. No one any longer knew exactly what was right, proper, or even legal.

The wave of Europe washed ashore on the Muslim world just when the proto-nations of the South were in the depths of despair over their weakness. In response, activists and thinkers throughout the South compared themselves to the Europeans: they saw Europeans confident where they were confused, strong where they were weak, and united where they were divided; yet their holy book, their teachers, and their leaders told them not to be concerned. The old verities remained. Appearances were not true. What could they believe? Some, like Imam Shamil of the Caucasus, just put aside such questions and picked up the sword. The more radical thinkers began to question what "their" Islam was. Was it what Muhammad had proclaimed or what they saw in their schools and mosques? Had it become atrophied? Had it become corrupted by ideas and practices that Muhammad would not have recognized? Had it become a clerical bureaucracy deaf to the issues of the times? Could it be revived? On an even more mundane level, was it allowable to wear a fez, eat from plates, sit in chairs, and embrace countless other innovations—which really meant Europeanization? Did "change" really still mean "to spoil"? These questions were to be repeated time after time from one end of the Muslim world to the other.

What the Muslims did not know was that the new ideas and customs were also difficult for Europeans to assimilate. Their societies also were fragmented, their religious and political institutions were often stultifying, and their people were still mainly rural peasants, uneducated, poor, and clinging to the past.

As we (and later Muslim thinkers) look back, we see the forces of change as inevitable, but they did not appear so to contemporaries. Moreover, there was great variation in the kind of change being made and in its timing. What we now know but what was then by no means so clear was that the North was undergoing a complex revolution of thought, social relationships, ways of earning a living, and expectations from life. Muslims were hardly aware of what was happening in Europe until the middle of the nineteenth century, but it would play a critical role in later events in the Muslim world. Here I focus just on the organizing effect of the new concept of relationships among people and states, nationalism.

Emotional identification with a hitherto abstract idea, the nation, had come alive and had energized the French. It was their identification with the new spirit of nationalism that had made

Napoleon's victories possible. He defeated the Egyptians and the Austrians not just by better tactics but because he was supported by a nation in arms. Others were to pick up that concept and apply it to their societies.

The young Russian officers who occupied Paris after the defeat of Napoleon were astonished by the vitality of the French and carried what they understood of nationalism back with them to Russia, where they organized the Decembrist movement. Observation of the French stimulated Johann Gottlieb Fichte to conceive his revolutionary *Reden an die deutsche Nation* (*Addresses to the German Nation*), which focused the thought of Germans on the "Germany" that did not then exist. Giuseppe Mazzini led the way toward the Italian Risorgimento. The idea of the nation spread, but it did so slowly and unevenly. It was sixty years before Fichte's message could be implemented by Otto von Bismarck. After founding Young Italy in 1834, Mazzini spent much of his life in exile, until his appeal finally found its audience. The ideas he brought forward—unifying the separate states; casting out corrupt, reactionary regimes; and putting aside the dead weight of clerical authority—would electrify later generations of Muslims.

The idea of nationalism or at least the reaction against foreigners came into focus quicker and more popularly in the Balkans. That was probably because the opponent was both foreign and present. The Greeks led the way against the Ottoman Turks. Their nationalism was, in effect, thrust on them. It took them just a decade to achieve independence. And it was through the Greeks that nationalism spread to other nations in the Ottoman Empire. As one after another found a new sense of identity, the dominant "nation" of the empire, the Turks, began to question whether "Ottomanness" was a sufficient touchstone for their existence. Their attempts at definition radiated throughout the Muslim world. It is the growing sense of nationalism to which I now turn.

CHAPTER 16

The Struggle to Define Identity

The first question that those who experimented with the idea of nationalism had to answer was, who or what is the nation? The Germans had brought forth the idea that it was the people who spoke the same language, what they called the *Sprachnation.* Taking up that idea, the Brothers Grimm used folktales and legends to conjure a past common to all Germans. That concept was adopted by the man who may be considered the father of Turkish nationalism, Ziya Gökalp. He echoed the sentiment of the Brothers Grimm when he wrote that the basis of Turkish nationalism was what he called *Türkçelük* (the essence of being Turkish). It is, he wrote,

> a bond that is superior and controlling [more than] race, populism, geography, politics and sentiment. . . . Man takes his most important, most basic feelings in the period of upbringing. While still in the cradle, with the lullabies he hears, he is under the influence of the mother tongue. . . . All our religious, ethical, artistic feelings, which give existence to our soul, are taken by means of this language . . . everything in our lives is an echo of our upbringing.[1]

Throughout Muslim societies it was not only the sounds of lullabies, folk stories, and fairy tales that shaped the minds of children: they were subjected to another set of resonances. Among children, who obviously could not understand what they were hearing, recitation of the Quran was the first and most intense of their educational experiences. Even among those adults to whom Quranic Arabic was at least partly incomprehensible—such peoples as the Somalis, the Moros, the Uyghurs, and the Caucasians—the timbre or singsong flow of sounds as the verses were chanted produced a hypnotic effect. Among Afghans and Pakistanis, it appears to have been the years of living in religious schools and constantly hearing and repeating the Quran that tied together the tens of thousands of religious students who formed the core of the Taliban movement. Similar childhood experiences are recorded by Egyptians.[2] The crowning experience was

the virtual explosion of the sounds of the Quran experienced by pilgrims during the hajj. Suddenly, as I have often been told, pilgrims found the Muslim world manifested in a torrent of sound as hundreds of thousands stood together, faced in the same direction, and repeated the same words.

Classical Arabic poetry is different. It does not have the emotional power of communal outpouring. But it is taught in much the same way as the Quran: students hear and memorize verses, whose meaning is also at least partly incomprehensible. Egyptians, Syrians, Palestinians, and Iraqis remark that its timbre also resonates throughout their lives. Among the bedouin, as I have experienced, the effect is far more powerful.[3] Sitting around campfires in the evenings, listening to elders, children are conditioned in the same fashion as the Turkish children Gökalp observed.

Particularly among the Arabs and the Iranians, poetry lives. Among them, it has an impact that poetry does not have in other languages. Verses pop up repeatedly in conversations, and the poetry duel—capping the verse of the opponent—is a familiar form of entertainment. In the midst of his battle against Russian troops, the great Caucasian guerrilla leader, Imam Shamil, was moved to recite verses of Arabic poetry. In coffeehouses and *chaikhanehs* (teahouses) before the coming of radio and television, storytellers entertained their listeners (and won their meals) by reciting mixtures of poems and folktales. In religious ceremonies, particularly among the Shiis, reciters implant national epics and tragedies in peoples' souls. Few are the works of history or even of politics and social science that do not weave poetry into their prose. And contemporary polemics often take shape in verse. Poetry, throughout the Muslim world, is regarded as a superior means of communication.

Without knowing or caring much about this element of the culture of the South, the British inadvertently promoted the spread of poetry to young people in the areas they controlled after the First World War. When they reorganized the school systems of Iraq, Jordan, and Palestine, putting aside the Ottoman Turkish curriculums, British administrators and their native assistants drew on Arabic poetry instead of the Quran to teach literature. Their intent was to avoid the religious discrimination that would have been imposed by using the Quran among Muslims, Christians, Jews, and people of other religions. They wanted something secular, and the pre-Islamic literature, which was all poetry, was the only body of secular literature in the Arabic language that was available.

But classical poetry is more than just a means of teaching grammar and more than just sounds. Embedded in it is a system of values, a *sunnah,* as strong as but very different from that revealed in the

Quran. The ancient bedouin poets gloried in individualism, hardihood, and violence but also in intense loyalty to their kindred. To protect themselves in a lawless environment, they relied on vengeance. And to ensure vengeance, they instilled in the listener the emotions of patriotism. To submit to wrong was treason. That was because one's fellow clan members were protected from attack only by the certainty of vengeance. Thus, the true man, the "patriot," had to exhibit bravery and enforce dignity. Virtually every Arabic poem has some reference to the fear of blame for not acting as a man should. War to the knife was not only sanctioned but demanded by the social ethic. Almost identical are the imperatives of Berber, Afghan, and Caucasian cultures. Of course, these were not the qualities that colonial governments wanted to promote among the conquered peoples, but few of them knew or could read what they were allowing to be taught. With the poetry came a sense of loyalty, anger at oppression, pride, and what eventually became nationalism.

The colonial governments would have been better served to allow the teaching of the Quran. The Quran and the Hadith deprecate bedouin values. They proclaim that the bedouin lived in the "Time of Ignorance" (*al-Jahaliyah*) when they followed a way of life that the sunnah of Islam aimed to replace. Even when they supposedly converted, they did not truly believe but only submitted. When they could, the bedouin cast off such little Islam as they had accepted and returned to their former wild and disruptive ways. Islam certainly did not favor foreign rule, but at least it encouraged the sense of cohesion and the concept of submission—submission at least to the rule of God.

Muhammad himself was a city man, a merchant who in his early years had dealt with, or at least observed, bedouin extortion of caravans and towns. For him, the bedouin were anarchists, enemies, indeed foreigners, whose poets composed and recited in an Arabic (the Najdi dialect) that was different from the Hijazi dialect of Arabic he spoke and in which the Quran is recorded.

And whereas the Quran promotes unity of the community and describes believers as brothers, the society into which Islam was introduced was not only linguistically but also socially disunited from the beginning. The message the poetry proclaims is the absolute requirement of loyalty to the clan but hostility to all its neighbors. Arabic has many words for "clan," but one that has been picked for modern needs is *qawm.* As we shall see, *qawmiyah,* a word signifying intense loyalty, the "patriotism" of the clan, has been adopted to mean "a broadly based nationalism."

At first sight this appears to pit the tribal sense against the Islamic sense, but the essential difference is one of scale. Bedouin patriotism was restricted to the clan; Islamic patriotism, at least theoretically,

united the whole Muslim world. In the time of Muhammad and his immediate successors, Islam's great strength was its ability to transfer the feeling of intense loyalty from the clan to the community or *ummah;* that is, to overcome the mutual hostility of the separate clans and "turn men's faces in the same direction." In its halcyon days, as I have laid out in Part 1, Islam enabled the previously mutually warring clans of Arabia to defeat the two superpowers of the age, Iran and Byzantium.

However, after the initial burst of energy, the new world of Islam lapsed into a multiplicity that resembled the tribal society of Arabia, but on a far larger scale. The units were not clans but rather whole communities with populations numbering not in scores or hundreds but in scores or hundreds of thousands. Many of the old causes of disunion remained in play: kinship loyalties remained local, division of resources was contested, and interpretation of the Islamic sunnah varied. In the very success of Islam, new causes of disunity arose. The empire was far too extensive for the available means of communication; it incorporated non-Arab and half-Arab populations; and not only did it tolerate the continuation of the cultures of adhering groups, but its core group, the Arabs, adopted some of the beliefs and customs of the conquered societies.

We outsiders bestow the label "orthodox" on one segment of the whole, the Sunni Arabs, but each segment thought of itself as orthodox, and, having asserted that its particular sunnah was the right way, it was determined to preserve it. Never, after the collapse of the Umayyad empire, would the Muslim world again be even superficially united. Rival caliphates, empires, kingdoms, and city-states developed separate cultures.

As taught by generation after generation of clerics, the Quran offered little useful guidance on managing the societies of the vast and complex Muslim world. The world the Quran described was essentially the little towns of Mecca and Madinah. Restricted to the Quran, the religious establishment could not adapt to changing circumstances. Muslims had to say that what God had commanded for Mecca and Madinah was valid for the whole world. Practical individuals realized that this did not work, so increasingly they did what they thought was required—or suited their own interests—and paid only lip service to the clerics and their rulings. The division of what in Islam is called *din wa dunya* (religious affairs and worldly affairs) generally functioned for centuries, particularly in the heyday of Islam. However, when faced with defeat, as it was first in the devastating Mongol invasions of the thirteenth century and later in the European invasions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Islam lost its absolute claim not only on rulers but also on the population. It

no longer, as it had in the time of its Prophet, caused "men's faces to turn in the same direction." In the turmoil that ensued, hundreds of thousands of the native peoples were killed, millions died of hunger or disease, and survivors huddled in fear. If these were the result of God's will, many began to feel, weak human beings needed solace.

Solace Islam had never offered. God was portrayed as a stern and unforgiving judge. Pity is not among his virtues. True believers did not need it. If they did as they were told—submit to his will—they would not need solace because with God's help they always won. But, everywhere they looked, Muslims saw a different reality. In the east, Mongol armies destroyed Baghdad, ravaged Syria, threatened Egypt, devastated large parts of Central Asia, and massacred the inhabitants of northern India and Kashmir, and in the far West, the great civilization of al-Andalus was being taken apart, town by town, by Spanish Christians. In the middle, European Crusaders had conquered the Mediterranean and taken the sacred city of Jerusalem. The Muslims had become refugees in the lands they thought were theirs. They had been cast adrift. And they were leaderless. Those they had supported and trusted to be their guides, the Islamic clerics, offered neither reassurance nor leadership. Many refugees appear to have tried just to hide. But among those who decided that they could not hide, new ways of thinking began to emerge.

Two main currents of thought, logically in competition with one another but often held at the same time by the same people, emerged. The first was an attempt to go back to try to find where the way had been lost, and the second was an attempt to redefine Islam to better meet contemporary needs. These currents merged in the belief that the formal structure of Islam, the clerical establishment, had failed.

Those Muslims who sought religious consolation were being driven, regardless of what clerics said, to amend Islam. They found that the distance the Quran proclaimed between humankind and God was too immense. Even true believers wanted to draw closer. Those who had seen their worlds shattered determined to bypass the clerics and to go back to the view of Islam Muhammad had proclaimed in the years when he too was an outcast. It was in his Meccan years that he had been a mystic. They sought to pick up that thread and reintroduce a closer relationship to God. But they could not do exactly as Muhammad had done because they knew that they did not have a direct tie to God. Thus, they had to find a different path to mysticism. The path they found was Sufism. It offered what formal Islam did not: it met the emotional needs of peoples whom the world had hurt.

Like a great sandstorm, Sufism spread across the Muslim world in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. At first, it was taken as a means of avoidance. By plunging into ritual, often a sort of trance, the

believer could achieve a state of union with the spiritual world and a release from the material world. In this enhanced consciousness, he could draw solace; he could put aside anxieties and dangers because he had become convinced that the material world, with all of its pains and pleasures, was just a chimera. The Sufi need not defend himself or his society, since the world itself was hardly worth the struggle. Survival was a matter of attitude, not action.[4]

But, paradoxically, as individuals learned how to withdraw, they gained the capacity to intervene. This created, in effect, a new and militant Islam. We have seen it in the struggles in the Caucasus and Cyrenaica and will see it again in the fights against the Chinese and Russians in Central Asia, against the Russians and Americans in Afghanistan, and against the Americans in the Philippines. By liberating believers from the world, Sufism also enabled them to fight for it. The new spirit was always attractive and sometimes briefly successful, but, as we have seen, it did not prevent the advent of imperialism.

By the nineteenth century, the halcyon days of the great conquests were just a memory, indeed only a faint memory, while the imperial role first Rome and then Byzantium had played on behalf of the North had been taken over by Spain and Portugal, then by France, Britain, Holland, Russia, and China. They were the new superpowers. And against them, Muslim society seemed helpless. Muslims were stunned. Their defenses fell as, one after another, Abd al-Qadir of Algeria, Abd al-Karim of the Moroccan Riff, Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi of the Sudan, Imam Shamil of the Caucasus, and many unremembered defenders were defeated. As their societies were overrun, Islam as a system of thought, a culture, and an organization began to be questioned. To a few at first and then to many, Islam seemed to have lost its power to cope with the world.

Many explanations for the decline and fall of what was remembered as a grand and stable civilization were proposed. Some were profound and others trivial; some were emotional and others rational. Among them were such as these: the nature of power had changed (so the “secret” of Europe had to be revealed); the dress worn by Muslims hampered them (so soldiers had to wear European uniforms); the people were not educated (so at least literacy had to spread); Muslim lands were not industrialized (so craftsmen had to be taught new skills); the Muslim world was disunited (so links had to be established among its societies); the leaders had abandoned themselves to opium and lust (so they had to be overthrown); the North was organized and ruthless (so armies and resistance movements had to be organized and become equally ruthless); and Islam itself had been corrupted by generations of narrow-minded jurists (so some new way to address

Islam had to be found). The most disturbing of the new ideas focused on Islam. Worried Indians, Iranians, Crimeans, Turks, Arabs, Berbers, and others began in the nineteenth century to think through the effects on their personal lives and their communities of these events and their reactions to them. Their anxiety prepared the way for one of the most remarkable men of that century, Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, whom I have discussed in Chapter 15. It was his vision of Islam as socially reforming and politically assertive that made him so exciting to worried Muslims. And it was precisely his failure, and the failure of his followers, that led many of them to search for another means of defense, another ideology.

They had to find a different perspective, but they did not have to look far. The imperialists who came among them proclaimed themselves to be nationalists.

Immediately, although not fully understood, this new way of thinking acquired status because those who proclaimed it appeared strong and successful. They did not seem to be burdened by their religion, and sometimes they even appeared to be hostile to it; in India they refused admission to their clerics. They seemed to pay little heed to convention, even their own. They were quick to take advantage of every opportunity and were not inhibited by convention. They worked together not as kin but in strange organizations that were run on different patterns from those familiar to Muslims. They were always curious and motivated. And they won. Naturally, it occurred to the losers that the imperialists' power derived from their way of motivating and organizing their people. Disunity was the source of weakness in the South. For whatever reason, Islam had not proved to be able to overcome disunity, protect independence, and provide security. The valiant defense of their societies had been undermined by dissidents in their own ranks, while the forces of the Europeans suffered no such disunity. They were strong, whereas the Muslims were merely brave. They knew how to run the new types of power-driven machines. Even though the *ulamah* and the old-fashioned elite found them to be crude and rough, they were quickly accepted by members of the minority communities and even by the more ambitious of the Muslims.

Learning about these new entrants into their world was naturally a high priority. And at least some of the Westerners were prepared to guide them. Catholic and Protestant missionaries established schools, opened hospitals, and set up printing presses. Some opened their schools and factories for students and workers in France, England, and Germany. For the many who could not visit Europe or get into contact with Europeans, a new literary industry began to turn out pamphlets, broadsheets, articles, and books. New dress, new manners, and new

ideas were avidly sought by the urban elite. As they delved deeper into the European experience, they found everywhere they touched what was then at the forefront of European thought and agitation: nationalism. And it was not long before some of them realized that they too had a nation. It was right under their feet. It was what they called a *watan.*

Among the settled peoples, the word *watan* meant "village or town." Like the French word *pays,* it identified where a person lived. It gave a sense of identity—a man from Sidon was identified as a Sidawi. But in Sidon, everyone was a Sidawi. So, in the days when relatively few people left their native towns, it was more useful to be identified in another way. Thus, traditionally a man was designated as "the son of": *ibn, -oğlu, -zahidi,* or *-ian* was attached to his father's given name, just as the Irish attached "O' " and the Scots, "Mac." But in the nineteenth century, place-names or tribal names increasingly began to be used instead—thus, al-Yamani, al-Afghani, al-Masri, al-Baghdadi, and so on. This occurred everywhere and in all languages in the South.

But this form of identification with a place did not necessarily connote loyalty. If the person thus known felt any affinity for the place he came from, it was usually lost after a generation or so. Just as a MacDonald is unlikely to know who Donald was, so al-Yamani soon ceased to have a personal relationship to Yemen. Even in the same generation, shared residence did not produce shared sentiment. In fact, it rarely did so because the typical village or town was split among two or more dominant groups. Each group was as autonomous as architecture could make it. Quarters were walled off from one another in larger towns and cities; in villages, members of the various divisions clustered around wells and often turned the outer walls of their houses into defensive barriers. Urban geography equated to kinship. What mud bricks or stone did physically, villagers usually did socially. Insofar as they could, they stayed within their kin group even for marriage. It was the kin group, not the watan, that claimed their loyalty.[5]

Regardless of the social reality, however, some of those who were the most exposed to European writers on nationalism found the word *watan* to evoke exactly what they were looking for—a nonreligious concept of identity. And the word stuck.

The first widely read writer to use the word in the sense of "nation" was an Egyptian. Rifaa Rafi was born in the Delta village of Tahta and so was known as al-Tahtawi. He was a most unlikely pioneer of nationalism. Fresh out of religious studies at Azhar University, when he was twenty-three years old, he was sent by the Albanian, Turkish-speaking, Muslim ruler of Egypt, Mehmet Ali, to be what in the

modern Cold War was called a “minder” for a group of young Egyptians who were being sent to France for training in mechanical crafts. Mehmet Ali wanted them to be trained, but he did not want them to be exposed to the subversive ideas of the Europeans, so he sent with each group an *imam* to keep them on the right track. Each imam was to prevent defection and report deviation. Tahtawi was probably not very good at those tasks; indeed, from what we know of his five years in Europe, he did not even try. Whatever he did about his charges, he managed to get a fairly close look at the forbidden society and to learn French. And when he returned to Egypt, he wrote a book to explain to his fellow compatriots what Europe was like.[6] Like some travelogues in our times, it was a runaway best seller. Published in Arabic, it was translated into Turkish and other languages.

Back in Egypt, Tahtawi continued his writing, but his most important activity—under government patronage—was to establish a school or bureau to translate the “practical” books Egyptians would need to read in order to modernize the country. He and his students and assistants translated about two thousand books, but he managed, with or without official knowledge, to include a few books that set out revolutionary ideas. He more or less sneaked them into Egypt. He was able to do it because his patron, Mehmet Ali, was known to like to hear about other rulers and generals, so Tahtawi used this penchant as an authorization to range far afield from the how-to books he was supposed to provide. Among others, he translated Montesquieu, from whom he brought into Arabic the new concept of *l’amour de la patrie.* It was Montesquieu who most deeply influenced Tahtawi’s own work, the book he hoped would guide the development of Egyptian society. It had one of those elaborate titles beloved by Arabic writers, *Open Ways [for] Egyptian Hearts [to Be Followed] in the Embellishment of Contemporary Culture* (*Manahij-al-alhab al-Misriya fi mabahij al-adab al-asriya*). It is there that he renders Montesquieu’s “love of the country” in the Arabic phrase *hubb al-watan* and portrays it as the motor impelling the forward motion of the European peoples.

Whereas in Islam, as I have pointed out, a true believer is expected, indeed commanded, to have strong loyalties to the general Muslim community, the ummah, that community is not defined as a place but rather by shared belief. What Tahtawi meant by the phrase “love of the watan” was distinctive. He meant for the watan to be defined geographically. For him Egypt was the nation. It stood apart from the world of Islam and from the surrounding Arabic-speaking societies. Part of its culture derived from its ancient past, about which Egyptians were beginning to become aware.[7] And for most Egyptians, their connection with Arabs was ambiguous. While Egyptians spoke Arabic,

the very word “Arab” denoted, in Egyptian colloquial Arabic, a bedouin, a nomad, a wild man of the desert, not a settled inhabitant of the Nile valley. It was Egypt, not the “others,” that was to be loved. And Tahtawi believed that inherent in the identification with Egypt were sentiments of loyalty that gave, or should give, its society solidarity and meaning.[8]

But, unlike later nationalists, Tahtawi also anchored nationalism in Islam. As he wrote,

> All that is binding on a believer in regard to his fellow believers is binding also on members of the same *watan* [because] there is a national brotherhood over and above the brotherhood in religion. There is a moral obligation on those who share the same *watan* to work together to improve it and perfect its organization in all that concerns its honour and greatness and wealth.[9]

Tahtawi would carry his ideas into a range of activities that deeply influenced Egyptian thinkers and spread far beyond them. In addition to his books, he wrote patriotic poems, named also for the nation, the *wataniyat;* he played a significant role in the spread of education among young Egyptians; he translated a number of French books in addition to those by Montesquieu; and he probably translated the robust French national anthem, “La Marseillaise.” Led by Tahtawi, Egyptians were captured by the idea of “Egypt,” their watan but with a French flavor.

Inspired by Tahtawi’s emphasis on a contemporary Egypt anchored in its ancient past, a journalist—a revolutionary new profession—by the name of Abdullah al-Nadim produced a popular play under the title *al-Watan.* It was staged in the newly built Cairo opera house in which Giuseppe Verdi’s paean to ancient Egypt, *Aïda,* was first performed in 1871. Six years later, shortly before the first Egyptian revolt against the English, a newspaper appeared under the name *Al-Watan.*

Two Lebanese were perhaps also influenced by Tahtawi, or at least by the popular discussion of his ideas on nationalism. Faris al-Shidyaq is best remembered for having founded in Istanbul in 1861 the first significant and widely read Arabic newspaper, *al-Jawaib.*[10] It set the style for a proliferation of broadsheets, pamphlets, and journals produced throughout the Muslim world in Arabic, Turkish, Farsi, Urdu, and other languages by later nationalist writers.

The second Lebanese, Butrus al-Bustani, founded in Beirut in 1863 a secular “national” school to promote access to European ideas by enabling its students to read French, English, Greek, and Turkish. Like Shidyaq, Bustani started a broadsheet or journal. He called his the

Syrian Trumpet and aimed to "trumpet" unity within what he thought of as his watan, the center of the modern state of Lebanon, which was then known as Mount Lebanon.[11]

Both men were patronized and influenced by the missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, who were engaged in a program of translation of Christian religious materials. The commissioners had provided a printing press to make available religious tracts. Their aim, of course, was to spread Christianity, but they recognized that Muslims and Eastern Christians were more apt to pay attention if they were given something they regarded as useful. To this end, they promoted literacy and also opened schools and clinics. Bustani and Shidyaq were, in the broad sense of the term, their translators. Association with the missionaries gave them a base on which to stand, but it did not promote all their endeavors. So, in time, both men broke with the missionaries—Shidyaq returned to Islam, and Bustani moved to political secularism.

Bustani played a significant role in starting the first Arabic "awakening" by producing the first encyclopedia available in Arabic and a modern dictionary. He was intellectually a firm Arabophile, but, like the Egyptians, he viewed the bedouin, that is, the "Arabs," as destructive and dangerous. Like Tahtawi, his Arabophilia was focused on a watan. Tahtawi's was Egypt; Bustani's was Mount Lebanon. Mount Lebanon was a sort of cultural island. Tolerated by the Ottoman Empire and influenced by Europe, it was relatively open to new ideas. Bustani was content with the religious and linguistic balance it had achieved. He respected the Ottoman system of tolerating diversity and, as a man devoted to the Arabic language, he believed in and publicized the idea that the people of Mount Lebanon could attain a cultural renaissance "within the framework of Ottoman rule."[12] The generally tolerant empire gave everyone, including Christians, security; pressing for more independence, he thought, might bring an end to tolerance. Better, he concluded, to be safe. And he firmly advocated learning as much from Europe as it could offer. The American missionaries had been helpful, but—as he discovered—Europe offered the settled inhabitants of Mount Lebanon much more.

Directly opposed to this view was Najib Azoury, also a Christian but of the next generation. He worked as a minor official for the Ottoman administration in Jerusalem and then, apparently with considerable bitterness against the Ottoman government—though it is not known exactly why—he moved to Cairo. In 1904, he "incorporated" himself in a one-man organization that he called (in French) the Ligue de la Patrie arab. The "league" issued pamphlets and published a book, also in French, called *Le Réveil de la nation arabe.* In his writings he stridently urged Arabic-speaking Jews, Christians, and Muslims to turn

to the British to protect them from the Ottoman Turks. The conflict in his attitudes toward the Ottomans was something neither he nor his successors could resolve. They needed Ottoman suzerainty but disliked it and disliked even more their need of it.

The most important Egyptian nationalist at the turn of the century was the short-lived journalist, politician, and lawyer Mustafa Kamil. Born during the British occupation, he regarded the British as Egypt's main enemies. To defend Egypt from them, he built a base of operations in the press. In 1900, he founded a newspaper, *al-Liwa* (The banner) to carry forward his ideas, and shortly before his death in 1907, he drew together those he had influenced with his newspaper to found the National Party. Like many educated and cosmopolitan Egyptians at that time, he encouraged French cultural activities. I believe that for him this was mainly a tactical move. He realized that the French would not be able to stop British imperialism and that they were themselves imperialists. Although he was guarded in his writings and in *al-Liwa* about his beliefs—as he had to be, living under British rule—it is clear that he was convinced that the whole of the North was the ultimate enemy. Then, shortly before his death, he saw a new source of hope. At least one group of the imperialists was being humiliated. In the war of 1904–1905, the Japanese navy sunk the Imperial Russian Pacific fleet in the Pacific and defeated the vaunted Russian army on the Asian mainland. As the only Asian power to defeat one of the imperial powers, Japan captured the imagination of Kamil's generation, and he celebrated the Japanese victory in his book, *The Rising Sun*.

A generation older than Kamil and destined to outlive him by another generation, Saad Zaghlul would play a pivotal role in the Egyptian revolt against Britain. But he did not begin his political career in opposition to imperialism. Whatever he privately thought, he passed muster with the British, who regarded him as one of their loyal native proxies. He even became a friend of the British ruler Lord Cromer, who famously disliked Egyptians. Cromer entrusted the post of minister of education to him in 1906. In that role, Zaghlul overturned one of the most subtle and powerful means of British rule: the dominance of the English language.

As the French had done in Algeria, the British had done in India, the Russians would do in the Crimea, and both the Russians and the Chinese would do in Central Asia, in Egypt the British made use of their language compulsory in government schools. Downplaying the native language and substituting for it the language of the dominant power were key aspects of "denationalization." Zaghlul did not denounce this policy, but gradually, partially, and without public discussion, he used his authority as minister of education to

reintroduce the national language, Arabic. The British did not object or question his motives, and they still thought of him as "their man" in Egyptian governance. This would change dramatically at the end of the First World War.

In January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson pronounced his Fourteen Points to set the agenda for the great conference of peace that would create a brave new world. His words announced an end to imperialism: "mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike." Suddenly, the Egyptian dream would become manifest. The Egyptians were elated; Wilson appeared to them, as to all the peoples of the South, a savior, a sort of *Mahdi,* God's agent to release mankind from oppression. Reluctantly, the British government said it approved of the spirit of Wilson's demarche and accepted it as the agenda for the peace conference.

Believing, or at least seeking to profit from, the pronouncement, Zaghlul organized a delegation (*wafd*) that invited itself to the British headquarters in Cairo, where it presented a petition asking to be allowed to take Egypt's case for independence to Paris and lay it before the peace conference.

Whatever the government in London had been forced to say to appease the American president, the British officials in Cairo did not intend to allow such impertinence by the natives. The surprised and angered British officials refused the request outright and sent the delegation packing. Zaghlul, always considered by the British to be their "man," was embarrassed. If he just went home, he would be the laughing stock of his friends and considered by all the Egyptians to be just a manipulated, lifeless doll like those they watched in the popular *karagöz* puppet shows. He apparently felt that he had no choice: he must stand up or quit his political career. So, as I interpret his action, Zaghlul reluctantly picked up the program Kamil had used a decade earlier to launch the National Party. He began to organize little committees throughout Egypt. Each group was to echo his demand that the British leave Egypt to the Egyptians.

Organizing Egyptians was a violation of the martial law that the British had imposed; when the groups coalesced into a political party, to be known for its planned delegation as the Wafd, the British politely but sternly advised Zaghlul to stop his seditious activities. When he refused, they arrested him and sent him out of the country. He had not only violated the martial law but had also forgotten the Egyptians' place in the scheme of British imperialism. Lord Cromer had given Zaghlul a sort of pass to be treated as nearly a "white man," at least within the strict limits allowable under the colonial system, but British officials never dreamed of treating Egyptians as equals.

They regarded the Egyptian peasants (fellaheen) as dumb brutes fit only to raise cotton for the mills of Manchester, and the small, educated elite, to which Zaghlul belonged, as “wogs” (wily oriental gentlemen). To the British, the pretentious wogs were the worst: they were just caricatures of Englishmen, dressed in cheap and ill-fitting copies of proper (that is, English) suits, venal, and cowardly.[13] So Cromer’s successors were genuinely shocked when Egyptian students bravely took to the streets, and they were furious at Zaghlul for inciting them.

Zaghlul’s arrest was the trigger for what amounted to a full-scale national rebellion. The “powder” that exploded was composed of anger at the British policy to exclude them from the “mankind” that Wilson had addressed; it was magnified and made national by their recognition that the British despised them. Ashamed by their fathers’ acceptance of this humiliation day after day for years, the students poured into the streets. And, having been given back their most precious national possession, their native language, they thought that they had become a new breed of Egyptians. Having no other means than their voices, they furiously shouted their demands. Nothing like their demonstration had ever happened in Egypt or, indeed, anywhere throughout the Muslim world. Nationalism had become popular.

After a confused period in which riots continued, the British used the time-honored means to procrastinate: they appointed a commission to go to Egypt and investigate. But when the commission members arrived in Cairo in December 1919, they were met by a boycott. Outside the circle of the puppet king, no Egyptians would talk with the commission members.

Zaghlul, like most nationalist leaders, tried to temporize, but the forces he had generated gave him no room for compromise. Any position short of independence would be regarded as too little and too late. And, astonishingly, the British undercut their own authority. When they bypassed the Egyptian government and indicated that they were willing to negotiate with Zaghlul—who had no official standing—they tacitly admitted that the Egyptian government was merely a puppet with no will of its own. Unable to admit that, they again arrested and deported Zaghlul.

Zaghlul’s removal did not stop the turmoil. Cairo virtually closed down. As the expenses of the rebellion mounted and the English taxpayers at home grew restive, the British government unilaterally declared Egypt independent, except in four “absolutely reserved” areas: imperial communications, defense, protection of minorities and foreigners, and the Sudan. Agitation continued, but to enough of the Egyptian agitators, the key thing was the word “independence.” The word itself was enough. That it was modified by those four absolutely

reserved issues was judged insufficient to keep rebelling. Zaghlul and the other leaders declared victory and went back to their accustomed ways, while the students were lured or driven back into their classrooms.

The nationalism of the Egyptian students was essentially secular and local, but elsewhere, throughout the Muslim world, imperial states' rulers and diplomats still thought they saw an anti-imperialist conspiracy motivated by Islam. They instructed their security forces to seize seditious newspapers and pamphlets and to spy on secret organizations and informal clubs. Westerners today will rarely have even heard of these groups or the people who led them, but in their time, their efforts terrified the imperialists.

Imperialists' fears were premature, but their worry appeared logical. Each power had conquered and was then ruling millions of Muslims. Their rule was occasionally brutal, often humiliating, and always exploitive. The rulers of each power assumed from their own experience and beliefs—all the governments of the North were also at least partially nationalistic—that Muslims would try to win their independence. Security officers, whose jobs depended on the threat of sedition, fed their fears. Muslims in British India, the Russian Caucasus, and French Algeria were reported to be "seething" and always on the edge of revolution.

With a well-developed and constantly renewed paranoia, the British, French, and Russian governments imagined a vast, shadowy movement they called "Pan-Islamism." For a generation, Pan-Islam was the bugbear of Northern rulers. British security officers, like army generals, were always preparing for the last war, and their text was the 1857 Indian "mutiny." Their fears were echoed by the Russians, who imagined a sort of domino theory in which their "seething" colonial peoples—Tatars, Turks, Chechens, and Tajiks—would rise one after another in the conquered but not fully subdued Muslim states to topple or subvert the imperial structure. The mood of the imperialistic governments may be best judged not in dry diplomatic dispatches but in a then wildly popular novel, a precursor of Ian Fleming's James Bond series, John Buchan's *Greenmantle*. *Greenmantle* cast sinister Turkish and German agents as the leaders of armies of terrorists from whom the civilized world was saved only by intrepid British agents. Buchan gave us 007 long before Fleming invented him.[14]

Pan-Islamic networks of insurgents, guerrillas, and terrorists then existed only in myths encouraged by intelligence agents, but the apprehension was real. After all, there should have been such movements. There was a logical basis for *Greenmantle*. The governments of Russia, France, and Britain assumed that Muslims wanted the independence that Europeans had and that their German

imperial rivals would try, with the help of the Ottoman sultan-caliph, to stir their Muslim subjects to action against them. They were well aware that the Germans were themselves thrusting into the South. Using their technology and capital and supported by their government, German firms were planning a railroad through the Ottoman Empire toward British India. At the urging of the caliph, millions of Indians, Iranians, Turks, Berbers, Arabs, and peoples of Southeast Asia and Black Africa donated most of the money to extend the railway line, on which they hoped to make the pilgrimage to the holy sites, from Damascus to Mecca. A few years later, when the First World War broke out, others answered the caliph's summon for a jihad. In a smaller-scale version of the great 1957 "mutiny," Muslim soldiers of the Madras Fifth Light Infantry Regiment—one of the most famous regiments in the British (Indian) army and then stationed far away in Singapore—rose in revolt against the British Empire. They were overwhelmed and executed.

In pilgrimage and jihad, the Muslim world came alive.

CHAPTER 17

The First Iranian Revolution

In Iran, as throughout the South, the transition from reliance on Islam to adoption of secular nationalism began in education. The urban upper class began to take their young people out of Islamic madrassas, where they were taught not much more than to memorize traditional Farsi and Arabic texts, and, to expose them to other subjects, they began to send them to the missionary schools that had opened in Tehran. Sending young people abroad was not popular in Iran until just before the First World War. Then many Iranians opted not to go to Europe but to the Ottoman Empire, India, or Russian-dominated Georgia. When they got abroad, they studied subjects not available in Iran. At least as important as what they learned in school was what they heard outside their classes. The incoming students listened to those who were already established and to the new contacts they made. They also read what were to them often revolutionary ideas in *Terjüman* (in Turkish), *Al-Urwa al-Wuthqa* (in Arabic), and a variety of occasional broadsheets produced in cities from Bukhara to Fez. As their Russian counterparts did with Aleksandr Herzen's *Kolokol* (The bell), the students sometimes were able to smuggle these publications back home to an even more appreciative audience.

Extraordinarily vigorous and persuasive, the editor of *Al-Urwa al-Wuthqa,* Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, whom I have discussed in Chapter 15, inspired students and their teachers everywhere. He was the leader of the intellectual underground in Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, India, and Central Asia; that he was banned in most countries and was brusquely thrown out of Iran by the shah made him all the more exciting to the young Iranians. We do not know enough about them to judge their reaction, but they probably were electrified when in May 1896 a young disciple of Afghani assassinated the shah. Afghani probably condoned and certainly did not oppose the deed. It was not quite a "shot heard round the world," but we may regard it as

the first move in the sequence that led to the 1905 revolution in Iran.

Naser-e-Din's successor, Mozzafar-e-Din Shah, came to the throne in bad health and wisely opted for a European rather than an Iranian medical treatment. But he did not have the money to go to Europe in the style his position required. To do so, he had to borrow. Both the British and the Russians saw his need as a means to penetrate Iranian defenses. The Iranian religious establishment (ulamah) saw the same possibility and were horrified. They accused him of selling Iran for sinful purposes. Thus, they exposed to public debate and rumor spreading the ideas that would form the ideology that made possible the revolution.

In addition to what he could get from the British and the Russians —never enough to meet his desires—the shah engaged a Belgian team of financial experts to get more. The Belgian team was told not just to plan but also to act. Beginning with the customs, the team leader, Joseph Naus, quickly moved into other areas so that, by 1903, he functioned as director-general of customs, minister of posts and telegraphs, high treasurer, head of the Passport Department, and minister of the Supreme Council of State. That a foreigner would occupy any one of these positions was unprecedented; together they amounted to Naus running the Iranian government. Wielding such power, he secured a Russian loan for the shah, but at the cost of giving Russia a banking monopoly. Objectively, that was reprehensible, but emotionally, religiously, and nationalistically, what was far worse was that Naus, who openly despised Islam and the Iranian Shiah religious establishment, allowed himself to be photographed at a costume party dressed as a Muslim cleric.

The photograph was taken as proof of subversion. As it was passed around from group to group, many already upset Iranians began to demonstrate. And, fearing what such unprecedented demonstrations might lead to, the shah ordered that they be squelched. When bribes and threats failed, he had his troops fire on demonstrators even in the shrine of Imam Reza, Iran's most sacred location. In other cities, police and troops publicly bastinadoed senior religious men.[1] Oblivious to the outbursts of public anger that followed, the shah asked (through Naus) for a second Russian loan. Tipped off in advance, the religious establishment rallied their traditional allies, the bazaar merchants, to demonstrate. To the government's surprise, they were joined for the first time by quite a different group. This new group was made up of the students and graduates of the new system of education. Grasping for words to put these secular intellectuals in an Iranian context and to differentiate them from the clerics, the contemporary Iranian cleric Nazem-ol-Islam called them "men of intellect" (*uqqal*).

Joining together, some two thousand members of these three groups, the ulamah, the bazaar merchants, and the uqqal, made a move that was both traditional and revolutionary: they abandoned their houses and work places to take sanctuary (*bast*) in a shrine, where the government dared not attack them.[2] From that act in December 1904 may be dated the first Iranian revolution.

As in the contemporary Russian revolution, Iranian protesters in the 1904 bast were vague about their demands. They lacked even a vocabulary to express their objective. But the word that they coined from a combination of Arabic and Farsi encapsulated the old while grasping for the new. It was a *majlis-i-adalat* (aka an *edalatkhaneh*), a "place of balances" (to the power of the shah).[3]

Deeply embarrassed by the size of the demonstration and the fact that it was carried out not by a mob of dirty peasants but by a civilized group of leading citizens, and particularly disturbed by the attention it got abroad, the chastened shah issued a decree in his own handwriting promising the protesters what he understood of their demands. Elated by their unaccustomed bravery and feeling that they had won a victory of some sort, the protesters peacefully returned to their homes.

Returning home, they quickly learned, was a mistake: the shah had no intention of keeping his promise. His secret police were collecting intelligence and reporting to him both that everyone loved him and that the people were getting ready to assassinate him. He listened to the ones he wanted to hear. If the seditious were asking for things that did not exist and required the coining of new words, perhaps their demands were not serious. Certainly the less educated, including the bazaar merchants, would not understand the curious new words and could not seriously press him to grant what the words stood for. Although he was sure that the clerics were inciting the protesters, they also kept assuring him that they loved him, prayed for him, and depended on him.[4] He was a master at playing them against one another. But he must have been disturbed by an unprecedented part of the agitation: what they were requesting was not just a royal favor that he could grant and then withdraw but rather an institution. That was much more serious. They claimed the right to speak about what they maintained were deplorable conditions of the people, presumably including the serfs on his own lands, saying that their misery was caused by corrupt officials, his own men; they made no secret of their desire to thwart the encroachment of the British and Russians on whom he depended for loans; and, worse yet, they demanded he allow the sitting of some sort of popular assembly. As that last idea took hold, despite his best efforts to stop it, the parliament was born.

While the senior members of the ulamah were covertly negotiating

with the shah, their secular allies were carrying on activities that were even more of an innovation: they were engaged in Iran's first propaganda campaign among the hitherto-excluded public. It was a sign of the spread of education in Iranian society that the radicals assumed they could build support by laying out their grievances and demands on posters (*shabnamehs*) to be read—rather than just listened to—by people in the streets. These suddenly appeared on walls all over Tehran, proclaiming that the government was a tyranny—the word they used was *istibdad,* which was used also to describe the Russian autocracy—that was subverting the traditional balances that regulated Iranian life.[5] And, for the first time, newspapers began to circulate. By 1906, there were nearly a hundred of them.

To the senior ulamah, the reply of the shah was clear: they should silence the subversives who spread evil talk and just pray for the sovereign's good health; to the secular protesters, the shah replied in quite a different medium—whips, sabers, and bullets were delivered by the praetorian guard of Russian-officered Cossacks. As more people were hurt or arrested, the senior clerics, who were led by two outstanding ayatollahs, Mohammad Tabatabai and Abdollah Behbahani, grew increasingly radical and strident. They told the shah point-blank that if he failed to fulfill his duties or exceeded his authority, the "nation," as they thought of themselves, had the right to choose another monarch because "a king is an individual like any one of us." [6]

Nothing like this had ever been heard in Iran before.

Stirring rhetoric is important, but revolutions always seem to need the emotional spark provided by a martyr. With trigger-happy Cossacks on patrol, one was quickly provided. When a group of religious students attempted to rescue a popular cleric who had been arrested by the Cossacks, a student was shot. He happened to be a descendant of the Prophet, so killing him was a sin as well as a crime. A crowd quickly assembled, picked up the dead man's body, and, hoisting his bloodied shirt as their banner, headed for the great congregational mosque. There they joined in enacting evocative Shiah mourning rituals. Then the students, followed by women and children wailing and lamenting, trooped out into the streets, forming an unprecedented mass demonstration.

Whatever confusion they may have initially felt about their aims, the members of the loose coalition of protesters had certainly learned a new means of political action—the mass demonstration. So, on the next occasion for a demonstration, more than twelve thousand people took part. But, fearing another government crackdown, thousands of merchants, notables, and uqqal took bast in what was, in view of their fear of foreign subversion of the nation, the most unlikely place, the

garden of the British legation.

As they poured onto the legation grounds, they quickly constructed a tent city in which they formed what amounted to an open-air university with lectures, study groups, and steering committees. In the process, the separate groups began to formulate demands that added up to the revolutionary notion of a constitution to restrict the power of the shah. So novel was this concept that it required the adoption of another new word, *mashrutiyyat,* from the Arabic word meaning "the setting of conditions."

Faced with this threat to his authority, Mozzafar-e-Din Shah temporized, attempted to divide the ulamah from the merchants, offered bribes to selected leaders of the bazaar community, and threatened dire punishment to the students. All to no avail. In his attempt to protect himself by blaming others, the shah dismissed his hated prime minister. Elated by that success, the protesters kept up their pressure. Finally, on August 5, the shah issued a handwritten order authorizing a consultative assembly. Astonishingly, it was to be open to men of Iran's several religions and all classes.

In triumph, the protesters returned from their monthlong bast, the bazaar reopened, and the tent city in the British legation garden was dismantled. At that moment, the fundamental question of the revolution was posed by an official of the British legation: "Are we witnessing the Dawn of Liberty in Persia, or the beginning of a sorry farce?"[7]

The answer soon became clear.

The shah was determined to protect his throne, whereas the protesters were united only in opposition to him. The religious leaders (avidly courted and lavishly bribed by the shah) had doubts about the merchants, and the merchants had even stronger doubts about the uqqal. They had trouble even naming their objectives among themselves, so, although foreign terms for the new nationalism were freely adopted, the ways in which they were understood varied from group to group. These differences centered on politics, but they arose from ways of life, traditions, and even modes of dress that made the essential political alliance fragile. Inevitably, these problems offered the frightened members of the reactionary opposition opportunities to recoup their leadership. Religion was a major weapon in their hands.

Religion immediately became an issue because, almost at the last minute, the protesters had substituted the word *melli* (national) for "Islam"; the new body, Majlis-e-Shoray-e-Melli, was to be a *national* consultative assembly rather than an *Islamic* consultative assembly.

The clerics were outraged, while the secular uqqal were delighted because it seemed to them that the emphasis on “nation” (*millet*) was modern. Both thought that it meant that they were opening the assembly to the whole nation, that is, to Christians, Jews, and Zoroastrians as well as Muslims. But in Persian (as in Turkish and Arabic), the word *millet* did not then mean “nation” in the sense they intended: each community was a separate millet divided from the others by custom, religion, dress, diet, and sometimes language. But, whatever the uqqal wanted, the other members of the coalition were not accustomed to consorting with, and certainly not sharing their decision making with, Christians, Bahaiis, Jews, and Zoroastrians. The very word *majlis* meant a “place of sitting,” and they did not intend to sit together. Thus, the Majlis began with a crippling weakness that its enemies found easy to exploit.

When the leading members of the coalition met to design an electoral law, the shah was, of course, opposed. It was only because of the intervention of the British legation that elections, the first ever in Iran, were held in October 1906. Inevitably they were deeply flawed: bribery, vote rigging, and intimidation ensured that the candidates were mainly those approved by the powerful. But even that did not make the new Majlis acceptable to the shah. He hated the “place of sitting” regardless of who sat in it. Worse, with his almost constant need for new money, he was horrified when, in one of its first moves, the Majlis voted to deny the government the right to contract foreign loans.

The shah’s hold on power had declined further than he realized. A Persian friend of the English orientalist E. G. Browne reported to him the advent of a new kind of protester against the regime, the *fidayin* (or, as spelled in the Western press, the fedayeen). We will meet them again in Afghanistan and Palestine. In Iran, Browne was told, “There is a Republican party (*dasta-í jumhurí-talab*) who have assumed the title of *Fidáiyyín* (‘self-devoted’). These meet by night and swear on the Qur’an that so long as they live they will struggle against Absolutism.”[8]

In the midst of this turmoil, on January 7, 1907, just a week after signing a decree granting a constitution, Mozaffar-e-Din Shah died and was replaced by his even more violent son.

Mohammad Ali Shah did not feel bound by the compromises his father had accepted; nor did he try to win over the delegates to the assembly. Rather, he chose to use against them the weapon the Russians had given him—the Cossack brigade. The Russian commander of that brigade, with the shah’s approval, bombarded the Majlis. Moving in, his troops arrested and took away in chains the newly elected prime minister; even more shocking to the Iranians,

they arrested the two leading religious leaders, the *mujtahids.* Then his troops looted and burned what had become the symbol of the new order, the building in which the assembly was held.

Worse was to come in 1907. Having struggled against one another for decades in the Great Game, with their secret agents trading blows and tracking one another in the high mountain passes while their ambassadors cajoled, bribed, importuned, and threatened officials in the palace, Britain and Russia suddenly agreed to resolve their differences and work together. This volte-face came about partly because, when imperial Germany began to build a huge fleet to match the Royal Navy, Britain thought it needed Russia as an ally. Russia also needed an ally because the Japanese had just administered a sharp defeat to it in the Far East. Moreover, the public in both countries was tired and favored a more modest approach to empire. The two governments decided to try to get along with one another.

In Iran, this new brotherhood of imperialism led to a division of the spoils. The Russians got the lion's share—the entire north, where they created a new colony like those they had organized in the Caucasus and Central Asia. The British got the south, which appeared to be the poorest part of Iran but satisfied the primary British strategic aim of blocking the road to India. The middle of Iran became a sort of no-man's-land in which companies and individuals of both powers could compete for concessions.

Oil would later enrich Iran, but the industry had not yet been developed, and the Iranian economy was a mess. Taxes were collected haphazardly—with the rich paying too little and the poor paying too much—and in such a harsh and exploitative fashion as to diminish productivity, often driving the nearly starving peasantry to abandon their villages. Much of what was squeezed out of the poor disappeared in the pockets of the rapacious collectors, and even the money that actually reached the government coffers also often disappeared. Iran had no budget. Not only was there no system to check on what came in and allocate what went out, but there also was no competent civil service. In what passed as a finance ministry, the only officials were men known as *mostowfis* (collectors, literally "those who seek to get what is due"), who were not subject to oversight. Because their positions were often hereditary, some were not even adults. Handling state revenues could be a lucrative sinecure, but it was often dangerous because the shah, the numerous members of the royal family, their hangers-on, and powerful officials and influential merchants all had their hands in the purse. Any attempt to draw the purse strings tight was sure to get a zealous official dismissed, imprisoned, tortured, and sometimes even murdered. No prudent person challenged the system.

The system itself was in disarray. The vast majority of the population, the villagers and the poorer urban people, may be set aside; they had not yet acquired a political role. Above them, the religious establishment and the bazaar merchants were confused, stimulated, and angered by the still-small intellectual groups—hardly yet a "class"—but they felt threatened by the shah. All this turmoil came together in the battered but not yet destroyed Majlis, whose every word was being spread by the emerging newspapers, broadsheets, and posters. There was much to report. Every member was speaking out, and scandals were suddenly being revealed. In fact, what had long been regarded as normal had been redefined as scandal. The shah and his entourage saw themselves in increasing danger but went right along draining as much of the revenues of the state as they could.

Recognizing that money was the key to reform but that attempting to control it was extremely dangerous, the Majlis, in one of its last brave acts, decided to seek outside help. It recognized that turning to either the British or the Russians was to use the fox to guard the henhouse; so, in 1907, it turned to the distant and then virtually unknown American government for help. The American government recommended a lawyer, publisher, and banker with experience in managing customs in then-American-controlled Cuba and the Philippines. Accepting the recommendation, the Majlis appointed William Morgan Shuster as Iranian treasurer-general and adviser to the Majlis, and they tasked him with bringing order to the nation's finances.

Shuster met with fierce opposition at every step as he took from the Russians, who saw him as an obstacle to their dominion over Iran, and from those Iranians who profited from financial chaos. Sizing up the obstacles he faced and determined to prevail, Shuster formed what amounted to a small private army, the Treasury Gendarmerie, to collect taxes from those who had avoided paying them. Members of the royal family accused him of a "lack of tact," which presumably was a polite way of saying that he did not accept bribes. He infuriated them by ordering the confiscation of the property of the shah's uncle. If the uncle was not immune, everyone was in danger.

Worse was to follow. In part buoyed by Shuster's example, groups of Iranian nationalists in the Russian zone began boycotting Russian imports—to the astonishment of all observers, they even stopped buying their virtually indispensable drink, tea. Some waylaid the Russian troops who were trying to protect Russian goods. Now really alarmed, the Russians sent twelve thousand troops marching toward Tehran to quell the resistance. The army and the Cossacks gave the Iranians their first lesson in the costs of installing representative

government. It would not be the last such lesson.

The Russians closed what remained of the Majlis and warned the deputies that if they attempted to reconvene, they would be put to death. The Russians also demanded that Shuster be fired. He was sent home in December 1911. The crackdown continued.

When the First World War started, most of the men who had helped to form the Majlis either went into hiding or fled the country. A number found their way to Germany, where some of them had studied. Since the Germans had never attempted to conquer or control Iran, the Iranians regarded the Germans as less dangerous than the British or Russians. Prudently, the Iranian government declared neutrality, saying that the conflict among the Europeans was not their affair. They would soon find that one could not just opt out of imperialism.

The German ambassador profited from Iran's unwillingness to support the Allied Powers. He urged its government to support the Central Powers, promising that Germany would end Anglo-Russian domination. Iranian nationalists, who had been gaining knowledge of the world in the last decade, thought this was a real opportunity, as in the first years of the war nearly everyone thought that the Germans were winning; their fellow Muslims, the Turks, though Sunnis, spoke for many Iranians when they proclaimed a jihad against the Allies. Seeing the danger, the Russians marched on Tehran. In desperate fear, at the urging of the then prime minister, virtually all the remaining members of the Majlis, along with influential ulamah and merchants, fled to form a government-in-exile in remote Kermanshah. Nationalism had arrived in Iran, as it would among the Arabs and other people of the South, in the form of the boots of soldiers.

CHAPTER 18

The First World War

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 caught the Allies with major conflicting interests and unresolved disputes that had arisen from the competition for empire. In Asia, India was the ultimate prize. Britain had it, and Russia was pushing steadily toward it. So, during most of the previous century, the two imperial powers had often been on the point of hostilities. We may think of the "front" in this cold war as a band running from the Mediterranean across the Black Sea and through Afghanistan toward China. So, starting from the west, Britain was determined to keep the Russian fleet bottled up in the Black Sea. To do that, the British had to keep the Turkish straits out of Russian control. And to do that, they had to keep the "sick man of Europe," as they thought of the Ottoman Empire, at least alive. This had been the major reason for Britain's 1839–1840 destruction of the growing power of Mehmet Ali Pasha of Egypt. When he attacked the Ottoman Empire, he threatened to upset the strategic balance.[1] British action against Mehmet Ali did not stop the Russians.

Fear of Russian "aggression" was a major cause of the 1853–1856 Crimean War. For the Russians, that war had been humiliating. Russian generals reacted by striking out at the targets they could reach in Central Asia and the Caucasus, as I discussed in Chapter 9. But Russian statesmen never gave up the dream of India. Russian and British soldiers and adventurers probed at one another for a generation throughout the middle of the nineteenth century in the covert war we know as the Great Game.

The Great Game was the heady stuff of romance, and the public loved the tales of derring-do, but it truly was a game: it amounted to little in real terms. Real war came close when Russian armies crashed into and conquered Panjdeh province in Afghanistan in 1885. Panjdeh was the last step in a twenty-year series of Russian advances through Central Asia toward India. Incorporating it in the Russian Empire upset the strategic balance, or so the British thought. They regarded

Afghanistan as the anchor of British policy in the east, just as the Ottoman Empire was the bulwark in the west. Britain was determined to keep both of them out of Russian hands.

Russo-British conflict over these weak states was inevitable. Even when relations at the top, among the emperors (who were all cousins), were cordial, and even when both governments felt threatened by what they saw as the possibility of an uprising of the Muslim people they had conquered, their statesmen and generals regarded one another as enemies. In short, during most of the century before the outbreak of the First World War, Russia saw Britain as a duplicitous, avaricious, and cunning rival, while the English saw Russia as the Cossack on horseback, riding south toward India, and, at least in the popular imagination, as an Asiatic tyranny, not a member of civilized Europe but the heir to Genghis Khan's Mongols. To convert imperial Russia from an enemy into an ally would be Britain's major diplomatic challenge at the outbreak of the First World War.

British hostility to the Russians in Asia was mirrored in Africa, where the ambitions of the British and French clashed. It began when Napoleon conquered Egypt. He had planned to use it as a base of operations against the British, who had taken away the French colonies in India during the French Revolution. On the heels of Napoleon, the British invaded Egypt and forced the French withdrawal. Thwarted in the east, France set to work acquiring an empire in North Africa, beginning with the conquest of Algeria in 1830. The French then moved south and east into Senegal in the 1850s and pushed into the interior, creating what became known as Equatorial or sub-Saharan Africa.

An attempt was made by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck of Germany in 1884 to head off conflict among the European powers by clarifying the ambitions of Britain and France in Central Africa and recognizing the claims of Belgium, Portugal, and Germany farther south. The conference he assembled of their rulers and statesmen did not result in a treaty and did not stop either Britain or France. Their "scramble for Africa" was what Bismarck, at least in his public stance, had tried to get them to avoid.[2] Each was energized by the impulse of imperialism, the ambitions of its officials, and the clamoring of the public to forge ahead.

The French had tried to cooperate with Britain in 1882 to invade Egypt, but they pulled back from the joint invasion and consequently watched Britain emerge with another rich colony. The French felt cheated and came to view Egypt somewhat like the Russians had viewed India: a wallet in the pocket of the British Empire. How to get Egypt back into play in the game of international strategy was a sort of upside-down African version of the Anglo-Russian competition in

Asia. It was the subject of power plays, shifting alliances, and threats of war for at least a generation. In hindsight we can see that the fears that drove all three of the imperial powers were largely imaginary. Perhaps the most absurd of all was the British fear that France was positioning itself in Central Africa to starve Egypt.

The British professed to believe that France was thrusting across Africa to establish a base on the White Nile where it could build a dam to choke off the waters of the Nile on which Egypt depended.[3] Such a task was then far beyond the capacity of any country. Indeed, it still is. But fear of French imperialism played well in the press, and the British government exploited it to push ahead with its own aims in the Nile valley.[4] British officials and the press imagined a huge French army plunging across Africa to the Nile to attack Egypt from the south. This incredible appreciation of British intelligence was an echo of the British belief that a Russian Cossack army was always ready to race down across mountains and deserts to attack India. The reality in Africa was that in 1898 the French managed, in months of exhausting marches in which they hacked their way through jungles or struggled across deserts, to get 120 Senegalese auxiliaries (*tirailleurs*) and half a dozen French officers to the little village of Fashoda on the Nile. Their exhaustion and the British government's declarations forced the French to admit publicly that they had no power on the Nile. The French withdrew. But the very absurdity of their bellicose statements confirmed the underlying hostility of the two imperial powers.

Hostility was deep seated. As the French saw it, the British diplomatic action and military display over "the Fashoda incident" was one more in a long series of infuriating British moves. It came sixteen years after the Anglo-French plan to invade Egypt turned into a British-only occupation. Once again the French felt humiliated. To try to calm them, Britain promised (in guarded terms) to evacuate Egypt within six years. Six years turned into half a century. To the French, Britain was "Perfidious Albion." Both governments were pushed by an upsurge of public anger toward war. Only because of their more urgent fear of Germany did the French not break off relations with the British.

Six years later, in 1904, the fear of Germany forced the two powers into an alignment, but relations remained fragile. Relations with Russia were hardly more solid. So, when war broke out in August 1914, the Allies were handicapped by the history of their views of one another.

Their opponents had no such emotional baggage. The German kaiser had even positioned himself as the protector of the South. In a visit to Sultan Abdülhamid II in 1898, Kaiser Wilhelm II proclaimed himself the friend of the world's Muslims. He was able to point out to

the sultan that Germany alone among the imperialists had not acted against the Ottoman Empire. Actions backed up the kaiser's demarches: German firms had started a project to help unify the empire by building a railway right across it. The project even won favor with French financiers, who offered to put up nearly half of the required funds. And in 1905, posing as a supporter of liberty, the kaiser proclaimed Morocco to be an independent country, not a possession of either France or Spain. German merchants scattered throughout the Muslim world catered to local tastes, whereas the British stiffly insisted that the natives follow English tastes. The Germans became popular.[5]

More significant than these attempts to win friends was Germany's successful modernization program. The Middle Easterners were not only impressed at a distance; Iranians, Turks, Afghans, and others who were allowed to do so sent their sons to study in Germany. Growth of German wealth, prestige, and power was evident on every level. German industry was technologically superior to the other Europeans', its population was more highly educated, its internal routes of transport tied the country together into a single market, and its rail network enabled it to shift its military forces rapidly so that even small forces could be concentrated quickly to achieve what military planners call "theater superiority." Germany had the best professional army in the world, whereas four out of ten French soldiers were newly conscripted peasants, and in the Russian army the figure was much higher. The Germans were professionals; the French and Russians were amateurs; and, except for their Indian troops, the British were vastly outnumbered.

When war broke out in August 1914, these disabilities quickly became evident. Within a month, the Russians had lost two armies. By early 1915, after catastrophic defeats in the field, the imperial government of Russia was rumored to be considering a separate peace with Germany—just as the communist government concluded two years later at Brest-Litovsk. The British had already realized that Russia would collapse unless means could be found to ship food, equipment, and weapons to it. But the Ottoman Empire held and blocked the only feasible supply route through the Turkish straits. French armies and small British units tried to break through, but without success. Operations were settling into a horrifying war of attrition that would ultimately exhaust all the imperial powers.

The war in Europe had not immediately spread to the South. It was not until November 1914, three months after it broke out in Europe, that Britain and France declared war on the Ottoman Empire. But even before Britain declared war, it had sent an Anglo-Indian task force into the Ottoman province of what later became Iraq to seize the

outlet of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. A short time later, it declared the pearl fishing and merchant village of Kuwait "independent but under British protection." It went on to annex Cyprus, and it proclaimed de jure what had long been de facto: that Egypt was its colony. The war gave Britain a sort of license to carry openly to the next stage what it had been quietly doing for a century: taking new territories to protect those it already had. As British prime minister Lord Salisbury wryly commented, if the British generals had their way, "they would insist on the importance of garrisoning the moon in order to protect us from Mars." [6] Imperialism had its own momentum and its own rationale.

But, even pressed to the wall and facing defeat on the Western front, with enormous casualties, the French remained bitter against England. Indeed, as casualties mounted, the French criticized the British—as the Soviet leaders would later in the Second World War—for not doing their part. Old issues still rankled. Old ambitions still governed. Looking ahead to what then seemed an unlikely victory, the French feared that Britain would soon take what remained of the Muslim world and that there would be nothing left for France.

The French already had a vast territory in Africa, and they wanted a piece of the Middle East. They believed that they had a "historic" role in the Levant. Their identification both with the Catholic Church and with the memory of the Crusades gave them, they asserted, a mission on behalf of civilization against the South and on behalf of the Catholic Church against Islam, and they were determined to carry it out. They no longer had an "India" to protect, but the psychological pressures on them were perhaps as powerful as the strategic pressures were on the British. The Russians stood apart from these angers and ambitions: they were fighting for their lives.

Despite their differences, Britain, France, and Russia each had a strong reason to cooperate with one another. When the Ottoman Empire called for a holy war, each of the imperial powers expected revolts: Britain in India and Egypt, France in North Africa, and Russia in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Each ruled over millions of Muslims, and each was warned by its security services that the Muslims were "seething." Each expected an upsurge of nationalism—whether ethnic as in "Pan-Turkism" or religious as in "Pan-Islamism"—and regarded it, at least before the terrible battles of the war, as even more dangerous than its European adversaries. Fear of jihad was augmented by imperial ambition. In varying degrees, all three powers were affected by both fear and greed, but it was Britain that played the lead role. I will now briefly show how Britain virtually established the Middle Eastern state system as we know it today.

To clarify British policy, one must differentiate the English

government in London from the British government in India. The distinction cannot be precise, but it should be understood. The British government in India was ultimately under the control of Parliament and the monarchy in London, but it had its own bureaucracy, its own revenues from its tax system, its own military force, and its own objectives. In most affairs British India was virtually autonomous. While joined at the head, that is, at Parliament, the administrations of India and England were separate bodies with different concepts of civic order, different traditions of service, different codes of law, and occasionally conflicting objectives.

Throughout the century before the First World War, the government of India was obsessed with fear of Russia. Its military and particularly its intelligence officers, as I have said, always expected to see hordes of Cossacks galloping down from the steppes through the mountains of Afghanistan onto the Indian plains. So India developed its own strategic policy aimed at preventing Russian access. Its goal was the creation of a belt of colonies or subservient regimes from the Mediterranean to the Pacific; that is, it aimed to create a sort of notional wall.[7] Toward the accomplishment of this objective, it dominated the Persian Gulf, invaded Iran and Afghanistan, set up outposts in Central Asia, carried out a covert anti-Russian military assistance policy in China, attempted to further "neutralize" Tibet, and conquered Burma. This was the so-called Forward Policy.

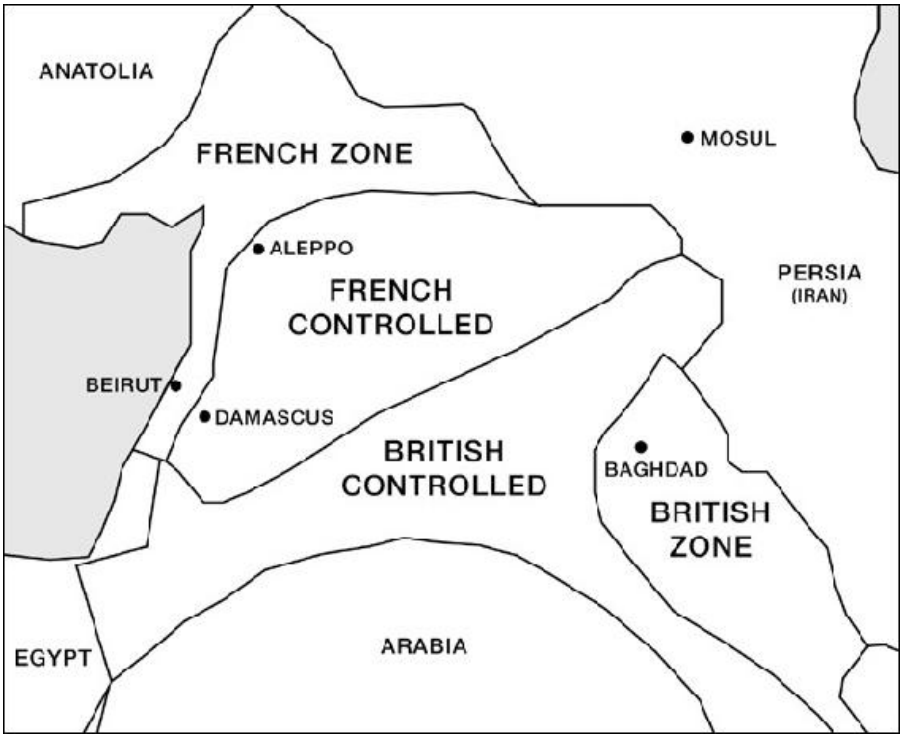
What had been the justification of the Forward Policy, the protection of India, took on a new importance to the London or home government when, in the decade before the First World War, the Royal Navy converted from coal to oil and the sale of oil from the newly discovered Iranian fields provided a much-needed source of revenue. Thus, the leaders of the British Indian Army assumed that the home government would approve the landing of an Anglo-Indian army at the top of the Persian Gulf. There, its objective was to move the effective Indian frontier up to Mosul (in what was planned to be its colony of Iraq) and up to Tehran (in what was to be its "protectorate" of Iran).

Apart from what the British government in India was doing in what we can call the "Eastern" policy, the British home government was engaged in a "Western" policy. This policy consisted of three, essentially incompatible, negotiations. I will deal first with the extension of its European policy, which aimed to unify the three empires and keep them all in the war against Germany. This policy first resulted in the Sykes-Picot Agreement, which can be considered Britain's first commitment on policy affecting the Muslim world. It came about after lengthy negotiations.

From November 1915 to January 30, 1916, on behalf of the British

and French governments, Sir Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot negotiated an agreement to divide the Ottoman Empire between themselves and to share parts of it with the Russians. The aim of Sykes was to encourage both the French and the Russian governments to stay in the war. The British feared that either France or Russia, or both, desperate as they were to stop the slaughter of their armies, might make a separate peace. The lure Sykes was authorized to offer was to enable the French and Russians to achieve their longtime objectives while Britain got what it wanted. As the English diplomatic historian A. J. P. Taylor remarks, "The British have always been anxious to show that, in defending their own interests, they are serving the interests of everyone else."[8] Britain's allies needed to believe that they had a tangible benefit in pursuing the struggle, despite the terrible casualties they were suffering. The Anglo-French agreement was designed to give them, at no expense to Britain, enough to keep the French and the Russians in the war; it was ratified the following May and was agreed to by the tsarist government.

Each was to get what it had long wanted. Britain was to get the areas that formed a center pivot in the barrier it had been building to protect its Indian empire. That barrier was a belt of territory extending eastward from Suez through the Mediterranean ports and across a wide swath of mainly desert to the already dominated Persian Gulf. Britain allotted itself about three hundred thousand square miles of new territory to add to the thirteen million already incorporated in its empire. France got recognition of its "historic" claim to the Levant coast, southern Turkey, and the former Ottoman provinces of Damascus, Aleppo, and Mosul.[9] That amounted to roughly a third as much as Britain received. The Russian Empire was to achieve its long-sought control of the gateway to the Black Sea, the Turkish straits; eastern, then largely Armenian and Kurdish, Anatolia, which was adjacent to its Caucasian territories; and the great Ottoman imperial city of Istanbul, which was enshrined in Russian memory as its spiritual home, Byzantine Constantinople.[10]



The Sykes-Picot Agreement divided the Middle East among the Allied powers. Each of the Allies was to take a slice of the Middle East: Russia was to get most of Anatolia and Constantinople; Italy was to get a corner of western Anatolia; the French were to get the Levant and most of Syria; Britain was to get a band of territories stretching from Egypt to Iran as a barrier to encroachment on their Indian empire; and Palestine was to be made into an international zone.

The Sykes-Picot Agreement marked the high-water mark in the flood tide of imperialism in the Middle East. It extended to the Middle East the agreement German Chancellor Bismarck had negotiated thirty years earlier, in 1884, to resolve the "scramble for Africa." Taken together, the two agreements were to embody the new order of domination by the North of virtually all the lands of the South. Had the Sykes-Picot Agreement been fully implemented, the three imperial powers would have controlled almost half of the total land area of the earth.

That three empires could control this vast area appears shocking to us today, but in the years around the First World War, Europeans did not find it so. As the English historian Eric Hobsbawm has written, "In 1914, plenty of politicians were proud to call themselves imperialists, but in the course of our century they have virtually disappeared from sight."[11] But imperialism has found a new justification, as the American philosopher William Ernest Hocking has pointed out.[12] Those who do not efficiently use their natural resources have tended,

"in the course of our century," to lose the right of ownership. In practice only the rich, powerful, advanced nations have secure possession. The weak, underdeveloped, and poor, even if longtime residents, have time after time in Algeria, Iraq, and Palestine come to be seen as mere squatters. Imperialism was thus to be regarded not as theft—as I have quoted the great Indian poet Muhammad Iqbal as describing it—but rather as a manifestation of the natural order and a force for improvement, ultimately for the backward. It was a necessary part of the white man's burden.

In his magisterial *Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890–1902,* William Langer pushed this argument further. He speculates on the intellectual context in which imperialism grew, pointing out that

> the tone of realism, not to say ruthlessness and brutality, that was so striking a characteristic of imperialism was due in a measure to the general cast of sociological thought prevailing at that time. A large number of contemporary writers remarked upon the tremendous vogue of Darwinian theories of social evolution. The phrases *struggle for existence* and *survival of the fittest* carried everything before them.[13]

While noting that the most popular books in Victorian England laid out the drama and necessity of imperialism, Langer focuses on the immensely popular writings of Rudyard Kipling, pointing out that critics justifiably saw his writings as assuming that

> the conquered natives were merely made to be fought with, conquered and ruled. They were viewed "merely as a huge mass of raw, brown, naked humanity to be manipulated by the civil and military officials for the arcane purposes of the great Indian Empire."

Langer goes on to argue that the emotional—and indeed economic—impetus toward imperial domination was not a policy imposed on the nation by the wealthy elite—and not necessarily because of the rulers' greed for the resources of the South; in fact, it was particularly popular "with the lower classes." The rough talk of common soldiers in Kipling's *Barrack-Room Ballads* "appealed to the fighting instincts of the race." Kipling "roused the sleeping nerve centers of imperialism." As Langer pointed out, workers also largely accepted the idea that their jobs depended on the trade that the empire made possible.[14] The more the English lower class learned, the more it supported the empire. To prove his point, Langer notes that the "rise of imperialism was contemporaneous with the extension of the suffrage in 1867 and 1884 and that it fell in the period when the effects of universal education were just beginning to make themselves felt." In short, the real power of imperialism was that it was popular in the country that carried it out. "Britain was at that time the imperial nation *par excellence* . . . the whole imperial movement was more self-conscious

and more widespread in England than in any continental country." He might also have pointed out that at least since Shakespeare imagined Othello, the Moor of Venice, Muslims had been seen as dark figures of evil, racially incapable of civilized living.

The Othello view of the colonial peoples was one of the attitudes Britain and France shared. Neither had any sympathy for "natives." Their citizens did not expect it. One of the spectacles they, along with other Europeans and Americans, most enjoyed was the display in zoos of captured natives, sometimes placed naked in the same cages as animals. The British flocked by the millions to see Nubians and Sudanese, while the French ogled Nigerians and Congolese. This is an aspect of imperialism that many of the peoples of the North would prefer to forget. As three modern French historians have written,

> Human zoos, the incredible symbols of the colonial period and the transition from the nineteenth to twentieth century, have been completely suppressed in our collective history and memory. Yet they were major social events. The French, Europeans and Americans came in their tens of millions to discover the "savage" for the first time in zoos or "ethnographic" and colonial fairs. . . . [In] these zoos, . . . exotic individuals were exhibited in cages or pens next to animals before a public avid for entertainment. . . . Denied an entirely human nature, they were thus colonisable and needed to be domesticated and tamed to turn them—if possible—into civilized men. This mise en scène helped to legitimize the West's colonial action.[15]

The underlying assumption of the Sykes-Picot Agreement was that "the conquered natives were merely made to be fought with, conquered and ruled." Sykes and Picot embodied attitudes that were shared by all the imperialists. That view was hardly challenged before the First World War, but then the imperialists of Russia, France, and Britain had the misfortune to run into a determined rival—imperial Germany.

In August 1914, war seemed a glorious affair, all flags and drums, fancy uniforms, and escape from humdrum jobs. Englishmen dropped their jobs, left their wives and children, and eagerly rushed to enlist. No one anticipated that the war would last more than a few months. But, as months drearily accumulated into years, the English were running out of money, food, and armaments, and casualties were mounting at a horrifying rate. To replace the casualties and feed their replacements, the empire depended on the Suez Canal, and in February 1915 a detachment of special forces in the Ottoman army reached and threatened shipping on the canal.[16] The British found that the Turks were tenacious warriors and feared that they might come back and actually interdict it. The Turks showed their mettle when they surrounded a whole Anglo-Indian army in the desert outpost of Kut in what later became Iraq. There, the Turks forced the

surrender of the 13,309 soldiers (mainly Indians) who were still alive in December—nearly 10,000 had already died. Meanwhile, the Royal Navy, which had converted before the war from coal to oil, was endangered when Muslim tribesmen in Iran cut the pipeline from the oil field to the port. At the same time, the Turks were preventing supplies from reaching Russia through the Turkish straits and so starving the Russian army and population. The British were unable to break through the Turkish lines. Gallipoli, as I will describe in Chapter 21, was the perfect choke point. As desperation and hunger mounted, the imperial Russian government had to consider a separate peace. And, as I have mentioned, the Indian security services feared an uprising of the Muslim population in answer to the Ottoman sultan-caliph's call for jihad. Those were the imperatives, or as they seemed to be, the demands, facing Britain's Russian and French allies.

Whatever happened on the battlefronts, the three imperial powers realized that they must keep their objectives secret. In contrast to the 1884 conference Bismarck had assembled in Berlin to discuss the division of Africa among the imperial powers, the 1916 Sykes-Picot Agreement was negotiated in secret and, having been confirmed, was withheld from the public. However, to be effective in winning public support for the war in the Allied countries, the agreement would logically have had to be revealed. But its revelation came as a bombshell. Shortly after the October Revolution in Russia in 1917, the incoming Bolshevik government found the Sykes-Picot documents in the archives of the Imperial Foreign Affairs Ministry and published them. Picking them up, the German General Staff passed them to the Ottoman government, whose governor of Syria forwarded them to the second-ranking leader of the Muslim world, Sharif Hussein (also spelled Husain), in Mecca, with the offer of a separate peace. Hussein sent them to his presumed British ally with a request for an explanation. Deserving the taunt of "Perfidious Albion," the British dissimulated. They told the sharif that the agreement was merely an exchange of views. That was not true, but whatever he suspected, he had to accept the British pronouncement.

The English public did not have the same reason to accept the explanation. In England the agreement might have been a major embarrassment, but it was not. When it was published in England by the liberal newspaper the *Manchester Guardian,* the documents occasioned no serious public criticism. The English public still liked the idea of imperial grandeur. However, when an account of the deal reached the Americans, it profoundly disturbed President Woodrow Wilson and his advisers. In an effort at what would later be called "damage control," the British told the Americans, as they had told the Arabs, that it was merely an exchange of views that in any case no

longer represented Anglo-French thinking because Russia had dropped out of the war.

The British statement to the US government was not true. The agreement was at the heart of the wartime strategy and would be essentially put into effect by Britain and France when they could do so; with some modifications of frontiers, each got what it had awarded itself—France by conquering Syria, and Britain by conquering essentially the rest of the Middle East. But in 1914 and 1915, all these events were still in the unknowable future.

Before the war had actually broken out and the idea of the Sykes-Picot Agreement had been conceived, the British government in India and the British administration of Egypt were establishing their own policy. It would lead to the second of the three sets of actions Britain initiated during the First World War. We should think of it as the southern strategy.

The southern strategy was a tactical modification of the longtime imperial policy. The modification had two objectives: the first was to block an anticipated attack of Ottoman forces, which presumably would aim to close the Suez Canal in the West and damage or cut the pipeline from the Masjed Soleiman oil field in southwest Iran to the Persian Gulf port, thus potentially immobilizing the Royal Navy. If these anticipated actions succeeded, Britain feared that it might lose the war. So even before war spread to the Middle East, the British sent a task force of the Indian army to seize the outlet to the Persian Gulf and augmented their forces in Egypt.

At the same time, an unplanned, almost accidental event occurred that would open the possibility of a major advantage. In April 1915 a son of the sharif of Mecca, Amir Abdullah, arrived in Cairo, stopping over on his return trip from the Ottoman capital to Arabia. He was in Cairo as a guest of the Khedive and, to the displeasure of the sultan-caliphate, called on the head of the British agency, Lord Kitchener.

The British, who had dealt with the Muslim establishment for over a century in India, knew that the sharif of Mecca, while officially an Ottoman official, was regarded by Orthodox Muslims as an authority second only to the caliph. Legally, he was the governor of the Hijaz, the area of Arabia that included Mecca, Madinah, Jidda, and Taif, and so was the “Protector of the Two Holy Sites,” Mecca and Madinah. His authority extended no farther, but his influence was felt all over the Muslim world. The British believed he had ambitions to replace the Ottoman sultan at least in his capacity as caliph.

To the British, his ambition was of enormous potential advantage.

If, as the British and their French and Russian allies feared, the Ottoman sultan joined the German side in the war, then in his capacity as caliph he would almost certainly call for a holy war. No one knew what would happen then, but the potential for uprisings was vast among the millions of Muslims in the three empires. If, on the contrary, the caliph's call were muted or negated by the voice of the sharif, the danger would be lessened or entirely avoided. So the British logically should have welcomed the arrival of Amir Abdullah, In fact, the senior British official, Lord Kitchener, broke off contact with him.

Not to be put off, Abdullah made contact with the oriental secretary (the equivalent of the senior political officer) of the British administration, Ronald Storrs.[17] Storrs summed up their conversation by saying that "Sharif Abdallah [*sic*] had unlocked his heart." Storrs did not say what he revealed, but rumors were then circulating around the Middle East that the sultan-caliph was considering replacing the sharif and his family with another official. Perhaps motivated by what he was hearing, Storrs wrote to his superiors "suggesting that by timely consultation with Mecca we might secure not only the neutrality but the alliance of Arabia in the event of Ottoman aggression."

In reply to Storrs's suggestion, Lord Kitchener, who in the meantime had become secretary of state for war, responded cautiously with a preliminary move. He ordered Storrs to send a "secret and carefully chosen messenger" to find out whether, if war actually broke out, Abdullah "and his father [the sharif] and the Arabs of the Hejaz . . . [would] be with us or against us." The Turks, of course, would regard a discussion of this issue with a senior official of the soon-to-be enemy as high treason, so the discussion took place indirectly and secretly—in what today we would call "backstairs diplomacy." When contact was made, the sharif discreetly hinted that the answer would be "with us." Kitchener replied on October 31, by which time the war in Europe had begun, promising that "if the Arab nation assist England in this war England . . . will give the Arabs every assistance against external foreign aggression."

Nothing in Arabia was ever secret for long, and the Turks were well aware of these talks. In response, they had their special agent Ashraf (Modern Turkish: Eşref) Bey contact and try to bribe the principal tribal enemies of the sharif, including the later king Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud, and attempt to assassinate the sharif.[18]

Then began the exchange of eight letters between the British and the sharif setting out the agreement under which the partisans of the sharif promised to begin the "Revolt in the Desert." The sharif wrote the first letter on July 14, 1915, to the newly appointed high

commissioner of Egypt, Sir Henry McMahon, in which he demanded British recognition of the independence of the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire—an area that was later to be divided among Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Israel, Saudi Arabia, and a small part of Turkey. The British pared down the sharif's demand. The last letter was dated January 30, 1916.[19] With an ill-defined exception of the Levant, the British agreed to enough of the sharif's demands that on May 23, 1916, he telegraphed Sir Henry, setting a date to begin the uprising. The small Turkish garrison at Mecca surrendered on June 13, but the Turks in Madinah held out. They could do this because they were supported by the railroad linking them to the Turkish bases in Syria. It was the need to break that link that gave rise to the guerrilla campaign promoted by "Lawrence of Arabia."[20]

The British appear never to have had great hopes for military assistance from the Arabs. They knew that the Turks had not allowed the sharif to acquire any serious military potential. Such guard duty as needed in Jiddah and Mecca was done by a small contingent of Turkish soldiers. The British continued the Turkish policy and starved the sharif's forces of even light arms.

The "army" that the sharif's son Faisal cobbled together was a tribal war party, fighting in the traditional style and mainly for the traditional rewards. The Prophet Muhammad would have understood it very well. It was British gold, Ottoman loot, and an Arab pursuit of valor—not nationalism or religion—that "turned their faces in the same direction." In working together, at least temporarily, the tribesmen played a useful role in diverting Ottoman troops, but the real value to the British was not their campaign, however much it was romanticized in later years by movies and books, but rather the position taken quietly in Mecca by the sharif. Because he did not join the sultan-caliph in declaring jihad, holy war did not happen.

Nor was there an uprising in other parts of the Muslim world in favor of the sharif. At that time, nationalism was hardly more than an idea in any part of the Muslim world outside Egypt. Most Arabs were either neutral on the conflict among the Great Powers, intent on staying out of trouble and avoiding tax collectors, or passively content to be governed by the local authority, whether it was Ottoman, Sharifian, or British. Only in Lebanon-Syria and Libya was there a vigorous Arab struggle against Ottoman rule, and in Libya the struggle was against the Allies.[21] What was happening in Libya, Egypt, and Syria had little or nothing to do with the sharif's desire to recapture the caliphate and make himself king of the Arabs. All told, about three hundred thousand Arabs served in the Ottoman army during the First World War.

The southern British strategy was successful in precisely the way

the British wanted it to be, at least during the war. But, as has been debated ever since, was it compatible with the European or Sykes-Picot strategy? As Storrs mentions, up to this point the British officials in Cairo who were conducting negotiations with the sharif "had but the slightest and vaguest information about the Sykes-Picot negotiations for the tripartite division of non-Turkish Turkey."[22] Nor, Storrs continued, did anyone in Cairo know that the British government in India had simultaneously "encouraged" Sharif Hussein's rival, the Wahhabi leader and tribal chieftain Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud, to stake out a competing claim to hegemony over Arabia. Either the British were engaged in double-dealing or they were completely disorganized.

The first and second aspects of British strategy during the war were not the end of the story. The first led, as we shall see in the next chapter, to the establishment of a new agreement between the victorious allies; the second strategy proved to have generated forces among those it sought to rule that became too expensive for Britain and France to maintain, at least in the traditional form of imperialism. It was the third line of strategy, the promotion of Zionism, that would prove to be the one the British could not control. I will deal with it in Chapter 20.

CHAPTER 19

The Postwar Middle East

At the conclusion of the Arab revolt when he rode into Damascus, Hussein's son Faisal would find that, while the sentiment for some sort of Arab nation existed in the former Ottoman province of Syria, the dedication of the population to it was not fervent enough to pull together the different religious and ethnic groups to create and protect a nation-state. Nationalist sentiment existed among the few but not among the many. And where it existed, it was too weak to be effective against the French and the British.

That was certainly the judgment of the British and the French. But President Woodrow Wilson questioned their judgment and despised their aims. He decided to find out what the native people wanted; respect for their desire to run their own affairs, after all, was the imperative of the doctrine he had proclaimed. The British and French governments were strongly opposed; they did not care what the natives wanted and thought that Wilson's approach to the South was directly against their interests. If a move toward independence began in Syria and Arabia, what could keep it from infecting all the peoples of North Africa, Egypt, India, Malaysia, and Indonesia? At the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, the British and French worked together to attempt to derail Wilson's decision to send a mission to investigate, and, when they could not prevent it, they decided at least not to cooperate with it. Oblivious to their opposition, as he was to much of imperialism—or, as his secretary, probably echoing him, called it, "the politics of grab"[1]—Wilson appointed a prominent educator, Henry King, and a successful businessman, Charles Crane, to take on the task. That was the origin of the King-Crane Commission of inquiry.[2]

The King-Crane commissioners conducted a sort of public opinion poll—the first ever held in Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine—from which they concluded that the population wanted, above all, independence and unity but would settle, if necessary, for an American or British mandate. Everyone they interviewed was opposed to any sort of

French supervision or rule.

The report of the King-Crane inquiry was a dead letter. Wilson probably never saw it because when it was delivered he had returned, already ill, to America. The French and British officials may have read the report, but they were not interested in native opinion. They knew what they intended to do. The French wanted, first, to solidify their position and that of their Maronite Catholic allies in Lebanon, then to get rid of Faisal, and finally to divide Syria into parcels that would be easy to control. They had the means and the will to carry out their policy. Faisal was in no position to stop them. What little hope he had to sustain himself withered as British support for him waned. To try to save his government, he made no serious effort to galvanize Arab nationalists but, at the recommendation of the American representative at the peace conference, he turned to the Zionists.[3] At a dinner given by Lord Rothschild, Faisal asked for Jewish help because "you have all the knowledge of Europe and are [our] cousins by blood." What Faisal was learning was that the choice before the leaders of the South was not between independence and rule by foreigners but only between masters—and even that was not likely. Faisal chose Britain and tried to get the Zionists, whom he knew to be influential with the British, to persuade them to stop the French. Such a policy, even at that time, was naive.

Even more naive was the reaction of the people he had adopted, the Syrians. The assembly that Faisal had convened in Damascus to represent the new nation of Syria did not understand either his objectives or his tactics. They regarded his negotiations as tantamount to treason. As the British political officer who oversaw Syrian affairs commented, his attempt to negotiate was like "a noose about Faisal's neck . . . he is in favour with [the Arabs only] so long as he embodies Arab nationalism and represents their views." [4] He was forced to drop his negotiations. Too late, if there was ever a propitious time, Faisal threw himself into the ranks of the nationalists.

Meanwhile, absent the United States, the victorious North reached agreement at the April 1920 San Remo conference on the divisions of spoils from the war. The French were willing to camouflage their proposed colony of Syria under the name "mandate" to assuage the sentiments Wilson had aroused, but they were not going to be stopped by a motley band of semisavages, as they regarded the Arabs. Recognizing that he had no means to resist, Faisal tried to temporize, but after just a few days he agreed to submit. The French did not accept his offer; they wanted a clear victory, not a peace negotiation. At last the Syrians realized their danger, but instead of rushing to the barricades, they turned on Faisal. A French army of ninety thousand men began their invasion of Syria in July 1920, three months after the

San Remo conference.

Thus it was in military defeat and under the shadow of French imperialism that the Syrians began their slow, painful, and often violent experience with nationalism. Unlike the Egyptians and the people of Mount Lebanon, they had no single watan—in the centuries of Ottoman rule, they had been at least administratively divided into two provinces, Damascus and Aleppo, with Mount Lebanon and Palestine separately administered. More fundamentally, the population was composed not only of Turks and Arabs but also of a variety of ethnic and religious groups—Alawis, Druze, Ismailis, and an assortment of Christian sects. The bulk of the country was desert and steppe on which tribal confederations lived as virtual nations. There was no single sense of Syrian *wataniyah* (territorial nationalism). The Syrians would never agree on their national identity, and their disagreement would provide first the French, then other interlopers, and in more recent times their own leaders a fertile ground for strife. The French invasion sowed the first seeds of hatred, which they and others tended and nourished almost yearly. Those events would yield the bitter harvest of our times.

Meanwhile, to the East across the Great Syrian Desert, the British had conquered the three Ottoman provinces of Basra, Baghdad, and Mosul that they would turn into Iraq. It took four years, from November 1914 to October 1918, to conquer them from the Ottoman armed forces with mainly Indian troops commanded by English officers and guided by members of the (British) Indian Political Office. What to do with the territory and its people was mainly a cosmetic issue. The British were determined that whatever it was to be called, Iraq would be controlled by them. The senior local official, Mesopotamian Expeditionary Force Civil Commissioner Arnold T. Wilson, then a lieutenant colonel in the Indian Political Office, wanted it to be absorbed into the empire, but he realized that the British government was not willing to go so far. He thought that an “informal or veiled protectorate analogous to that of Egypt before the war” was likely. However, he reported to his government that Britain was free to do whatever it liked because,

> with the experience of my Political Officers behind me, I can confidently declare that the country as a whole neither expects nor desires any such sweeping schemes of independence as is adumbrated, if not clearly denoted in the [just issued] Anglo-French Declaration [promising independence]. The Arabs are content with our occupation. . . . [But] the Arabs of Mesopotamia will not tolerate that foreign Arabs should have any say in their affairs. . . . National unity means for them unity of Mesopotamia and not unity with either Syria or Hejaz.[5]

Rarely has an intelligence appreciation been more wrong.

Understanding why Wilson was so wrong provides a valuable insight into the imperialist dilemma.

Sir Arnold Wilson was the very personification of the North. Highly intelligent; educated in England at the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst; and trained in service with the British Indian Army, he was an "expert" in colonial affairs, and the government he ran was honest, efficient, and paternal. His aim was order and economy. In his thought there was no room for native participation and certainly not for nationalism. He shared the British view of tribesmen. For him they were wild and colorful savages with whom one could develop a jocular relationship (provided one was armed); for him, as generally for the British, all Indians and Westernized "town Arabs"—whom the British called "wogs" (wily oriental gentlemen)—were deceitful, dangerous, pompous, incapable, and best kept out of all governmental affairs. Wilson and his colleagues despised them and made no effort to hide their contempt. Worse, they made no effort to cater to local sentiments. Their policy was undiluted imperialism.

Anger at the imperial policy Wilson promulgated had the effect of unifying at least the Arab part of the Iraqi population. Remarkably, and despite what he told his government, the Sunnis and Shiis, who were always suspicious of one another, joined together in the first expression of nationalist sentiment. They agreed that they must drive the British out of the country. Merchants closed their shops and shut down the bazaar, street mobs attacked British soldiers, and religious leaders ordered a jihad. On June 30, 1920, Iraqis began a full-scale insurrection. The huge British army, the equivalent of thirteen divisions, came under attack by a guerrilla force composed of virtually the whole population. Before it ran its course six months later, the war cost the British the lives of 1,654 soldiers and more than six times as much money as they had spent to get the Arabs to fight the Turks in the "Revolt in the Desert." As Colonel T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) wrote on August 2, 1920, in the *London Sunday Times,* "We have killed about ten thousand Arabs in this rising this summer. We cannot hope to maintain such an average: it is a poor country, sparsely peopled; but [while] we are told the object of the rising was political, we are not told what the local people want."

The British should certainly have understood what the local people did not want: they did not want to be ruled by Englishmen and to become part of the British Empire. The English public made clear to Parliament that it would no longer support the cost of suppressing the Iraqis. Wilson and his policies were to be replaced. To figure out what to do about this new nationalist challenge, Winston Churchill, then colonial secretary, convened an elaborate seminar, composed of all the senior British Middle East "hands" and some of the "tamer" Arabs, to

meet in Cairo in March 1921.[6]

At the end of this elaborate seminar, Churchill revealed a stunning ignorance of the people of the South whose fate he was deciding. Getting ready to report to Parliament on his decision to impose Faisal on Iraq as Britain's proxy, Churchill sent a note to his aide that, fortunately for his reputation, was kept secret for years. As he wrote,

> Let me have a note in about three lines as to Feisal's religious character. Is he a Sunni with Shaih [Shiah] sympathies, or a Shaih with Sunni sympathies, or how does he square it? What is [his father] Hussein? Which is the aristocratic high church and which is the low church? What are the religious people at Kerbela [the Iraqi Shiah "Rome"] I always get mixed up between these two.[7]

But Churchill, the imperialist that he remained to the day he died, got the main points of the "experts' " advice: to call Iraq a kingdom (but keep it under British "tutelage"), to appoint Faisal the ex-king of Syria as king of Iraq (as Britain's proxy), and to cut expenses (by attacking insurgents with Royal Air Force bombers and machine-gun-equipped "armed Fords"). Had Churchill's plan been fully carried out, the RAF would have also employed poison gas on insurgents. The façade of independence, Churchill thought, should quiet the nationalists, the security police should weed out hard-liners, and the air force and the mobile forces should be effective against tribesmen on camels. Since boots on the ground might also be useful, the British enrolled a native auxiliary.

British prime minister Winston Churchill convened a gathering in Cairo in front of the Sphinx in 1921 to implement a revised version of the wartime Sykes-Picot Agreement, which essentially established the Middle East as we know it today. Photo courtesy of James A. Cannavino Library, Archives and Special Collections, Marist College.

Use of natives to fight natives, as we have seen, was the common practice of imperialists. The pattern was set in the sixteenth century in Mexico by Hernán Cortés and in the Indian Ocean by Vasco da Gama, both of whose conquests were largely effected by native troops. In Morocco, the French used *sipahis* from Black Africa. The Dutch fought the Aceh War with Javanese and other Indonesian *marechaussée* troops and then fought the Javanese with Africans from the Gold Coast, whom they jokingly called "Black Dutchmen." The Chinese fought the Central Asian Muslims with Chinese Muslims, and the French would rule Syria with fifty thousand of their own troops and some fourteen thousand native soldiers. In Iraq the British would train, equip, and command "Assyrian" Christians, just as they used Gurkhas, along with Hindu and Muslim sepoys, in India.[8] It was always cheaper and nearly always possible to enlist natives in the service of imperialism. Native troops were cheaper than European soldiers, and if they were killed, no one in Europe usually even knew.

To try to make colonial exploitation and suppression palatable both to the natives and to liberals at home, the British worked with the French to create a new image of colonies. Colonies were no longer to be seen as a system of exploitation but rather as a grand system of civic education to prepare the backward natives for self-government. European "teachers" were to be their advisers and they were to be dutiful pupils. The colonies were to be called "mandates," but, far from Woodrow Wilson's ideal, they were just a more subtle form of Northern imperialism. Mandates were really colonies in drag.

As in Egypt, so in Iraq, the British allowed a limited local government to come into existence; also as in Egypt, the British "reserved" the key elements of government—the army, finance, and foreign affairs. Also, as they had done by reserving the Sudan, through which passed Egypt's lifeblood, the waters of the Nile, in Iraq they kept control of what became Iraq's lifeblood, oil. Finally, as they had exiled the Egyptian nationalist leader Saad Zaghlul when he was troublesome, they arrested and set to exile in Ceylon the only Iraqi capable of challenging their imposition of a king, an adroit politician from Basra, Sayyid Talib. Faisal would be king no matter what. Below him and fronting for their British "advisers," forty "friendly" Iraqis would play a game of musical chairs in the twenty-one cabinets that met in the decade of discreet British rule. Iraq may be said to have been the most sophisticated example of modern imperialism. But, as

we have observed, the new system not only delayed the solution of fundamental issues but actually itself was the cause of many of those that in recent years have proved so costly and painful to the Iraqis.

On education, the British had an almost clean slate. The Turks had done little to educate the Iraqis. On the eve of the First World War, their schools were taught in Turkish, which few of Iraq's six thousand students could understand. Education stopped at the primary level. At first, the British made few changes. In 1920, they opened two secondary schools for a grand total of thirty-four students. They opened two more secondary schools over the next three years, but, as the mandate system government informed the League of Nations in the 1923–1924 *Annual Report to the Council of the League of Nations,* "in this country it is neither desirable nor practicable to provide Secondary education except for the select few." The report advised that four schools was probably too many. In the primary schools, few of the students attended full time, and most stopped after two or three years. It must have been difficult to distinguish the students from the teachers because almost half the teachers had no formal education. Lack of training was not a problem because the nine in ten Iraqis who were rural never saw a teacher. Little was done to prepare Iraqis even to read, much less govern themselves. In the last year of the mandate, the school budget was less than one-third of the amount allocated to the police.

Feeling that they had been purposefully deprived of their sense of nationhood, Iraqis regarded the British educational system as simply another tool of imperialism. As soon as their limited independence allowed them, they began to create a non-British system. The only local model was the religious school, and they do not seem to have ever considered reverting to it. They wanted something modern and something in English but not British. When they could, they turned to America both to educate their more promising young men and women and to design the educational program for those who were unable to go abroad. America played a key role, but the Iraqi leaders were also attracted by what they saw was happening in Europe.

Living under a government that regarded itself as above such law as existed, which was not very much, and that regarded its citizens as mere economic resources, those Iraqis who "counted" were looking for models that seemed to encourage pride and strength. They were attracted, as were Italians, Spaniards, Greeks, and others, by fascism. It is difficult for many today to conceive of how attractive fascism appeared to so many otherwise intelligent people. The English Fascist Party attracted much of the English aristocracy, and the first senior British official in Iraq, Sir Arnold Wilson, returned home to join it.

The essence of fascism was militarism, and in Iraq the only

disciplined, armed, and mobile group was the army. It proclaimed itself to be the custodian of the nation's spirit. Many thought it should set the tone for the educational system through a sort of expanded and ideological version of the American Reserve Officers Training Corps. The aim was to foster the sense of nationhood and to inculcate pride by rallies of uniformed marching men. History was to be taught in such a way as to "strengthen the 'national and patriotic feelings' in the hearts of the pupils . . . stories about famous Arabs and their qualities [should be] taught in such a way [as] would lead to the growth of national feelings."[9] Had the program to accomplish this lofty aim not been taken seriously by the responsible officials, it would be regarded as a parody. The would-be young soldiers—and they were not many—were not interested. The leaders had little with which to build. In some desperation, they brought an American consultant to determine what could be done. He found that "there is evident among teachers and pupils no great patriotic fervor for their new nationalism . . . [they] must get a vision of what the nation demands of them and an inspiration from these new possibilities of national culture and political achievement."[10]

This Iraqi quest came to a head in 1938 when the Iraqi would-be fascist Sami Shawkat was appointed director general of education. Not content with trying to instill a nationalist sprit in listless young people in the classroom, he created a movement outside the school system. Harking back, in name at least, to medieval associations (*al-Futuwah*), he promoted a youth organization similar to the European paramilitary Fascist organizations—the "shirts."[11] He put the young Iraqis into uniforms, drilled them to instill discipline, and incited them to aspire to re-create the glorious days of Arab pride and power. The Futuwah aimed to be Iraq's Risorgimento.

Sami Shawkat's moves among urban students were only a façade. The reality for most Iraqis was what amounted to a social revolution in the rural areas. British policy in Iraq, as in Palestine, favored the conversion of tribal lands into private property. At British direction, the Iraq government commissioned a study of the process by Sir Ernest Dowson. As he found,

> Many village areas appear to have been wholly or partially registered as the personal possessions of local notables, without any consideration of the immemorial rights of those who had regularly occupied and tilled the land or pastured their flocks thereon. The pinch in these cases seems to have been mainly felt when the lands were pledged, and forfeited, to town-dwelling merchants for debt.[12]

The ostensible aim in Iraq was to encourage investment in pumps to irrigate land and so to produce more revenue for the state. But, as Dowson found, the result was that tribesmen lost their lands to people

with money and connections. The program was written into laws that turned the tribal peoples into serfs with servitude enforced by the army and police force. The hatred generated by this measure caused revolt after revolt in the years that followed and culminated in the 1958 revolution.

Riding the anger of his fellow compatriots came a seasoned politician. Rashid Ali might be thought of as an Iraqi version of Zaghlul. Like Zaghlul, he had been a member of the privileged inner group and was trusted by his British masters. He held his first ministerial portfolio under the British in 1924 and later served three times as prime minister. Less subtle and more determined than Zaghlul in expressing his nationalism, he more resembled other Asian nationalists. Like Sukarno in Indonesia, Subhas Chandra Bose in India, and the Burmese leader, Aung San, Rashid Ali looked on the coming of the Second World War as an opportunity to win independence. All these leaders operated on the adage that "the enemy of the enemy is the friend." None of the four knew much about Germany or Japan, and each of the four focused on his struggle for independence.

When war broke out, Rashid Ali flirted with Nazi Germany through its ambassador in Ankara. The British retaliated by imposing severe sanctions on Iraq. Rashid Ali then took the next (and fatal) step by trying to drive the British out of the base they had built in the desert west of Baghdad. That base was to Iraq what the Suez Canal military base at Ismailia was to Egypt, the point of control. From the desert post at Habaniyah, the RAF could dominate Iraq. Air power was decisive, but it was not their only weapon. As in India, they had well-developed security services and training missions with the military. The British knew squad by squad and almost soldier by soldier the weaknesses of the Iraqi army, which they had trained, vetted, and kept weak. So the troops on the base easily immobilized the Iraqis while they rushed in troops from India and the Desert Legion from Jordan. Then they quickly overpowered all Iraqi resistance. Rashid Ali fled across the mountains to Iran. From Iran, he reached Germany, where he tried his hand at anti-British propaganda and finally made his way to exile in Saudi Arabia. Without him, but partly because of him, Britain returned to dominate Iraq behind a façade of local politicians for the next seventeen years.

If Iraq proved a thorn in the British Empire's foot, the wound became infected in Palestine. What distinguished the problem of Palestine was in large part the fact that, like Algeria, Palestine combined the problems of Great Power imperialism with those of European colonialism. In Algeria it was caused mainly by greed; in Palestine it was caused partly by fear. To understand the Palestine tragedy, we must begin in Europe.

CHAPTER 20

Palestine, the Much Promised Land

Palestine brings into sharp focus and adds a new dimension to the relationship of the North and the South. This is because the cause was in Europe, while the result was in the Middle East. Zionism, which is bitterly opposed by the natives of Palestine, was a response to savage and long-established European anti-Semitism.

No European society treated Jews as full members, and most exhibited generations or even centuries of nearly always ugly and often vicious treatment of Jews. Even relatively benign governments exploited, segregated, or banished Jews (and such other minorities as Gypsies, Muslims, and deviant Christians). Less benign governments encouraged pogroms and tolerated or practiced mass murder. Northern history reveals a pervasive, powerful, and nearly perpetual record of intolerance of all forms of ethnic, cultural, and religious difference. There were periods of relative tolerance, but they were sporadic and unpredictable as generation followed generation. In the later years of the nineteenth century, anti-Semitism increased in virulence as large numbers of Ashkenazi Jews moved westward from Russia into Poland, Austria, Germany, and France. Flight did not save them. As one early Zionist, referring to the massive migration of Jews from Russia and Poland to Western Europe, said, “The Jew carried anti-Semitism on his back wherever he went.”[1]

Jews also were affected by the currents of nationalism and, like the Egyptians, Iranians, Turks, Berbers, and Arabs, began to think of themselves as a “nation.” Whereas before they had occasionally sought a temporary haven (a *nachtaysl*), they began to seek what Theodor Herzl called a *Judenstaat*. Herzl and his followers believed that having a separate, faith-based nation-state would be a permanent solution to anti-Semitism. This was the essential aim and justification for Zionism. The president of the Anglo-Jewish Association, Claude Montefiore, spoke to the group in London on November 30, 1917, saying, “The Zionist movement [to create a nation-state] was caused

by anti-Semitism."

Nineteenth-century Europeans and Russians understood and approved of the concept of the nation-state. The French, Germans, Italians, and various communities in the Balkans were reforming and rethinking themselves into "nations." Not surprisingly, Zionists—at first vigorously opposed by other Jews—decided to do as the Europeans were doing, getting for themselves a territory on which to found a state. Europeans, who were pleased to get rid of their Jews, suggested various possible sites. Usually the area offered was far away and in someone else's territory—Argentina, Australia, Manchuria, or East, North, and West Africa. Only the Russians offered a place in their own territory. But the only one on which the Zionists could agree was the Holy Land. To encourage them to focus only on Palestine, Israel Zangwill coined a description of their aim and the land of Palestine as "a country without a people for a people without a land."[2]

Unfortunately, while Zangwill's was a powerful slogan, it masked a different reality. Given the technology available at the time, the scarcity of water, and the relative poverty of the inhabitants, Palestine was already densely populated. For comparison, it had about five times the contemporary population density of the United States. Until massive amounts of money and new technologies became available in the 1930s, population and land were in balance but at a lower level than in wetter, richer areas.

Herzl's and Zangwill's words disturbed the imperialists and particularly the English. They were willing to help the Jews set up a colony, which might be militarily useful and perhaps even profitable, but they were uneasy about the establishment in the South of a truly independent state. Three answers to the anticipated objections were tried: First, Herzl himself had stressed that a Jewish state would be a "rampart of Europe against Asia, an outpost of civilization against barbarians."[3] That is, they would become allies in the great imperialist task the English and French had assumed, the white man's burden or the *mission civilisatrice.* The second answer was to deny that Zionism aimed to create a state. Nahum Sokolow, then the general secretary of the Zionist Organization, wrote in *Die Welt* on January 22, 1909, "There was no truth whatever in the allegation that Zionism aimed at the establishment of an independent Jewish State." [4] The third effort to win support was to cater to the English fear of Jewish immigration. In his presidential address at the Tenth Zionist Congress in 1911, David Wolffsohn proclaimed the aim of Zionism to be "not a Jewish State but a homeland."[5] This homeland would deflect at least some of the millions of Jews who had fled Russia to settle far away from England and thus avoid compromising its established Jewish community or competing against English laborers.[6]

So the decision was reached to downplay the German word for state, *staat,* as in *Judenstaat,* and substitute for it the word *heimstatt,* a "homeland." It suggested something less than a state. In that spirit, the early Zionist Leo Pinsker described the Zionist aim to be the formation of a "colonist community," a *kolonistengemeinwesen.*[7] The Hebrew equivalent of the German word for a colonist community was given by Chaim Weizmann as the *Yishuv.*[8] Thus was born the concept set out in the 1917 Balfour Declaration of a "national home for the Jewish people" in Palestine.

The British government was not fooled. Two ministers spoke out, but in the privacy of the cabinet. Lord Kitchener commented that it was unrealistic to think that the half a million Arabic-speaking Palestinians would be content to play the role Jews had assigned to their ancestors, the Canaanites, as "hewers of wood and drawers of water." And Lord Balfour, the author of the Balfour Declaration, told his colleagues on August 11, 1919, that "as far as Palestine is concerned, the Powers [that is, Britain and France] have made no statement of fact which is not admittedly wrong, and no declaration of policy which at least by letter, they have not always intended to violate."[9] Unmoved, the British government, which was in occupation of Palestine, created a civil administration on July 1, 1920. To implement the Balfour Declaration, it appointed a well-known English Zionist, Sir Herbert Samuel, as the civil commissioner. His first task was to begin large-scale immigration of Jews. It was not until two years later, on July 24, 1922, that the Council of the League of Nations approved a mandate for Britain in Palestine. Meanwhile, although without League of Nations approval, British policy was being implemented.

The attitude of the British administration toward the Palestinians was set out in a (British) government of Palestine memorandum some years later:

> The Arabs of Palestine are predominantly Moslem in religion. Generally speaking their outlook is Asiatic; they are traditionalist, and by Western standards are inclined to place the transcendental before the practical. Their pride in the possession of a common language affords a tie with all parts of the Arab world which is a factor which should not be underestimated. Although by tradition feudal, and hence somewhat lacking in cohesion, they were not, however, unaffected by the impulse to self-determination which made itself apparent in the provinces of the Ottoman Empire in the early days of the present century and this has left its mark on their political thought and conduct. . . . The bulk of the Arab community is composed of peasants and small land-owners, hard-headed and stubborn and with a profound sense of attachment to the land.[10]

At the beginning of the British mandate, the Palestinians had not yet caught the bug of nationalism. They were divided by religion,

residence, and wealth. Most of the eight hundred thousand Arabic-speaking natives were villagers who, like their neighbors in Egypt and Syria, thought of their villages as their "nations," their watans. The eighty thousand resident Jews were mostly pilgrims or merchants and lived mainly in Jerusalem or Haifa.

What the Balfour Declaration calls "existing non-Jewish communities," the Palestinians, spoke Arabic but followed a variety of faiths. Religious differences were reflected in the traditional Ottoman pattern: each religious "nation" had its own schools, dress, diet, and tradition; each managed most of its own affairs. Muslims and Jews apart, the Christians exhibited an astonishing array of separate sects. A British study in 1931 of the then roughly one hundred thousand resident Christians found them to include "adherents of the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Greek Uniate (Melikite), Anglican, Armenian (Gregorian), Armenian Uniate, Jacobite, Syrian Catholic, Coptic Abyssinian, Abyssinian Uniate, Maronite, Chaldean, Lutheran, and other churches."[11] Whatever else the parched and rocky land produced, it was certainly luxuriant in religions.

The Muslim community was relatively homogenous, but it lacked the experience of managing many of its affairs. Its schools and clinics were state organizations, and it had no recognized leaders other than Ottoman officials. Also, unlike the Christians and Jews, both of whom had generations of experience in dealing with foreigners, Muslims had no experience in external relations or ties with foreigners. At every level, foreign relations had been the prerogative of the Ottoman Empire. Unlike Christians and Jews, Muslims were not a "nation"; they were integrated into the population of the empire.

Beginning in the 1880s, the Ottoman government undertook a number of revisions aimed primarily at increasing tax revenue. The most important of these moves was to impose on the traditional system of land ownership the Western concept of private property. Similar revisions had been carried out in England in the 1773 Enclosure Act and in Russia in edicts from 1861, and, as I have mentioned, in the 1930s one would be carried out in Iraq. Much the same process was encouraged by the British in India. It enabled city merchants or anyone with the money to acquire as private property communal lands and lands "owned" by the cultivators under local custom. It often reduced the status of the cultivator to serfdom while turning the investor into his lord.[12]

Few Palestinian villagers even heard about the new law. They continued to plow and harvest as they always had done. For them, land was an extension of kinship rather than solely an economic asset. Apart from the new law but impacting its application was a traditional practice. It came about because villagers were terrified of government.

When officials needed revenue, which was nearly always, they sent teams of armed tax collectors to get it. The levying of taxes resembled a military campaign in an enemy country, and the collectors often acted like “search and destroy” special forces or even like bandits. They took as much as they could get, driving away cattle, confiscating grain, and even kidnapping young men for military service. Government, as experienced by villagers, was an army of occupation, so villagers did everything they could to avoid contact with it. When they could not flee, they often treated the tax collectors the same way that shopkeepers in Italy and America deal with the Mafia, paying for protection. But sometime in the seventeenth or eighteenth century, some hit on an additional defense. In Palestine, as in Syria, Iran, and the Indian Punjab, where the process has been carefully studied, peasants often agreed to register their lands in the name of a powerful person who could protect them. Thus, in “law” as opposed to custom, their farmlands became the property of the rich and powerful men who “farmed” their taxes for the government and protected them from it.

That was the legal system the British found when they set up their government in Palestine. They were familiar with it even before they arrived because they had already dealt with similar systems in Ireland, India, Kenya, and other parts of their empire. Ottoman tax records specified that large blocks of villages and their adjoining croplands belonged to identified individuals, families, or companies that had agreed to pay taxes to the government. In addition, the new “owners” were allowed to squeeze all they could from the peasants. That was the system the British enforced.

One Palestinian example shows how it worked. In 1872 a Lebanese merchant family, the Sursuks, acquired the title to a block of fifty thousand acres and seventy-two villages in the vale of Esdraelon. The villagers had registered titles in the names of various influential people and officials who offered to protect them. The transactions were, in their minds, just bribes. The plots they plowed, planted, and harvested continued to be theirs in the only law they knew, village custom. The Sursuks bought up these titles. For them, the titles were rather like stock certificates. Their agents collected the charges, which amounted to about 100 percent on their investment each year. The villagers were willing to pay to be left in peace. They worked hard and benefited from good soil and relatively plentiful water. Their land was described by the English traveler Laurence Oliphant in 1883 as being “like a huge green lake of waving wheat with its village crowned mounds rising from it like islands, and it presents one of the most striking pictures of luxuriant fertility which it is possible to imagine.”[13]

During the decades before the First World War, everyone was reasonably content: the government got its revenue on a regular basis; the villagers were not robbed, raped, or kidnapped; and the tax farmer got rich. Then, in 1920, the British government promulgated the Land Transfer Ordinance, under which the Sursuks were allowed to sell the land and the villages. They had bought title for roughly £20,000 and sold it for £726,000 to the Zionist Purchasing Agency. The Sursuks became rich, and the Zionists took a giant step toward their objective of acquiring Palestine; the losers were the villagers. Under the British-enforced law, some eight thousand of them were evicted. They had no skills other than working the soil, and the soil was gone. Moreover, by the terms of the Jewish National Fund, they could not be employed even as laborers, and the land itself became mortmain, never again to be sold to non-Jews.

Duplicated time after time, such purchases gave the Zionists the best lands—80 percent of which were acquired from absentee "owners."[14] Since, however, the villages were autonomous and rarely in touch with one another, the impact was not generally felt for years. As in Algeria, where villagers sometimes chained themselves to the houses the French settlers were taking from them, each village acted on its own. When the general pattern was finally realized, it provoked a rebellion.

Early moves toward a sense of community if not of nation were often expressed in a religious idiom and sometimes in a concrete form. Paramount among the sites for the Jews was the Wailing Wall and, for the Muslims, al-Aqsa Mosque. For the first time, on August 15, 1929, this dual holy site in Jerusalem became the focal point for a national confrontation when a mob of several hundred Jewish youths paraded with the Zionist flag and sang the Zionist anthem. Infuriated by the display, a mob of Arab youths attacked them. Riots spread across the country. Within the next two weeks, 472 Jews and at least 268 Arabs had been killed. For the first, but certainly not the last, time, the British rushed in troops to restore order. A harbinger of things to come, that episode marks the birth trauma of Palestinian nationalism.

Deeply disturbed by the costs to their taxpayers, Parliament sent out a mission of inquiry. Its director was a man of great experience in the Indian civil service, Sir John Hope-Simpson, who was accustomed to communal disorder. He avoided the growing sense of nationalism but reported that underlying all else was the land issue: of the ten thousand square miles of Palestine, more than three-quarters was "uncultivable" by normal economic criteria, and 16 percent of the good lands, like the lands and villages acquired from the Sursuks, was already owned by the Jewish National Fund. He doubted that there was enough left to support the Arabs and advised that the

immigration of Jews be halted. Under heavy Zionist pressure at home, the government turned down his recommendation.

Following that decision and the failure of various subsequent commissions, studies, and reports, the political thoughts of the Arabs turned to fear. Already in the 1930s, the Zionist leader David Ben Gurion recognized that Arab fears of the Jewish takeover of Palestine were justified.[15] The British, of course, were well aware of the feelings in both the Christian and Muslim communities. The report of the Royal Commission of 1937 noted "their fear of Jewish domination." This finding was echoed in a number of subsequent reports. As summarized, it was "fear of domination by the Jews; fear of their worldwide connections; fear of their extensive resources; fear of their enterprise and power of organization; fear of economic eclipse followed by political domination; fear of the submersion of the Arab characteristics, the Christian and Moslem characteristic of Palestine beneath the domination of a people having a different religion and an alien structure of society."[16]

The Royal Commission, like in all subsequent reports, emphasized the European background of the Palestine problem, what the Europeans had done to the Jews. In a memorable summary, the report laid out the history:

> Christian rulers came to look to them [the Jews] when they wanted money. But, despite their usefulness, they were never liked. Popular instinct draws away from what is strange, and the Jews—foreigners, foreign-looking, keeping to themselves, clinging to their peculiar faith—were strange. In the eyes of the Church, moreover, they were the worst of heretics. . . . And behind that was the general idea that on all Jews, in all times and places, lay the guilt of the Crucifixion.
>
> This complex of ill-feeling came to a head in the period of the Crusades. The wrath of the Crusaders fell as much on Jew as on Moslem; and it soon seemed as much an act of piety to kill Jews in Europe as to kill Saracens in the Holy Land. A wave of persecution, increasingly cruel in its methods, spread all over Western Europe. First in England, then in France, Jews were expropriated, tortured, massacred, and finally expelled from the country.[17]

And this, of course, was written before the horror of the Holocaust became manifest.

"In Palestine, as elsewhere," according to a semiofficial English account, "the rise of the spirit of nationalism vitally affected the status

of religion. Religious feeling was not necessarily weakened but it was altered and no longer remained supreme. The deep division between Christian and Moslem Arabs which existed under Turkish rule in Palestine disappeared, and Christian and Moslem began to work together, sharing the same aims of independence and unity. . . . But, in spite of this trend, the Arab leaders in Palestine have rarely succeeded in creating such a solid nationalist movement as has existed in Egypt."[18]

The Arabic-speaking population was simply not equipped. As late as 1941, after twenty years of British assumption of the League of Nations' charge to "uplift" the population—put forward as the justification of the mandate—only one in four Arab children attended school. It is a commentary on the whole North-South relationship that this meager number is a substantially larger proportion than in India, Iraq, and Britain's African colonies. It is difficult to escape the judgment that one aspect of imperial rule, whether called a mandate or a colony, was to weaken the native population.

The Palestinians held what they called a national congress in 1920 to try to determine a national policy. But the congress illustrated the fact that there was no Palestinian nation—rather, what pretended to be a nation was essentially a representation of one of the major Palestinian clans, the Husseinis. But the congress did establish an executive committee as its action arm to oppose the British mandate. In the following years, it broadened its membership to include other Palestinian groups; then it demanded the creation of a parliament and the cessation of Jewish immigration. By 1935, six political parties were operating legally, but all were relatively small. The next year, they managed a coalition known as the Arab Higher Committee, whose task it was to negotiate with the mandate government.

The Arab Higher Committee, from which one of the constituents immediately defected, demanded that the mandate government cease its efforts to impose Israel on Palestine or to divide the country. That got little attention from the British government. So the issues were taken up by others. An attempt to find a middle way or at least to inform the government of their position was attempted in June 1937 by 137 judges and other senior officials who were serving in the British mandate government. Their demarche was seconded by 1,200 lower-rank Arab officials. It was not a statement of national determination but a plea for mercy. They certified that

> the Arab population of all classes, creeds and occupations is animated by a profound sense of injustice done to them. They feel that insufficient regard has been paid in the past to their legitimate grievances, even though these grievances had been inquired into by qualified official investigators, and to a large extent vindicated by those inquiries. As a result, the Arabs have been

driven into a state verging on despair.[19]

The British were not motivated by sympathy but wanted to find a way out to cut their costs. Palestine had proved to be the least attractive of their colonies. So they sent out another, and this time more weighty, mission of inquiry, the Royal Commission of 1936. The commission found that

> An irrepressible conflict has arisen between two national communities within the narrow bounds of one small country. About 1,000,000 Arabs are in strife, open or latent, with some 400,000 Jews. There is no common ground between them. The Arab community is predominately Asiatic in character, the Jewish community predominantly European. They differ in religion and language. Their cultural and social life, their ways of thought and conduct [are] as incompatible as their national aspirations. These last are the greatest bar to peace. . . . The War and its sequel have inspired all Arabs with the hope of reviving in a free and united Arab world the traditions of the Arab golden age. . . . The Arabs would be as much outside the Jewish picture as the Canaanites in the old land of Israel. . . . In the earlier period hostility to the Jews was not widespread among the fellaheen. It is now general. The intensification of the conflict will continue . . . the situation, bad as it now is, will grow worse.[20]

It did.

Following the 1937 publication of the report, which called for the loss to the Arabs of most of the best land of Palestine and the permanent settlement of a large Jewish colony that, undoubtedly and publicly, was moving toward statehood, a much larger portion of the Arab population developed something that we can identify as nationalism. And, like most nationalist movements, it first manifested itself in violence.

What they had failed to do in negotiation, the Palestinian nationalists tried to do with guns and bombs. In response the British government replaced the high commissioner who had favored negotiation and imposed martial law with military courts whose sentences could not be appealed. In 1938, 382 Arab nationalists were tried and 54 were executed. Britain brought in about eighteen thousand troops and three thousand additional police officers supported by aircraft, armored cars, and artillery. They even drew on a Royal Navy battle cruiser. To the British, the Palestinians were not nationalists but terrorists. To assist them, the British also armed and trained five thousand paramilitary special troops supplied by the Jewish community. In 1938 alone, British army and Jewish paramilitary forces killed about 3,500 Palestinians. Thus, in the interests of “security,” they drove the Arabs further toward a sense of nationhood.

Ironically, the coming of the world war in 1939 caused both the

Jews and the Arabs to put aside their struggle and come to the aid of Britain. That truce would not last long. As Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's Afrika Korps was driven away and no longer posed a threat to Palestine, the Jewish paramilitary troops that the British had armed and trained to fight the Arabs turned against them. Being formed into a national army (the Haganah) and terrorist groups (the Irgun and its offshoot the Lehi, known in the press as Stern Gang), the Zionists carried their fight to the Palestinian mandate government. With equipment looted from British military camps, on August 8, 1944, they tried to assassinate the British high commissioner, and on November 6, they did assassinate the senior British official in the Middle East, Lord Moyne. In the months to come they engaged in an informal but savage war with the British.

While the British government did not make common accord with the Arabs, it turned against the Zionists. In Parliament Winston Churchill denounced the Zionist attacks, calling the Jewish terrorists "a new set of gangsters worthy of Nazi Germany . . . [who] must be destroyed root and branch."[21] And, while Churchill did not draw the comparison, the contrast between the determination of the Zionists and the weakness of the Palestinians was manifest. It would become more evident in the months ahead. On July 22, 1946, the Irgun and the Lehi, with the agreement of the Haganah, blew up the King David Hotel, which housed the British administration. Jerusalem became a sea of barbed wire.[22]

The war against Britain was real, but far more important to the Zionists was the destruction of the Arab community. Israeli actions, which I will discuss in Part 4, had been in the planning stage since well before the war. The Zionists are now known to have decided at least by 1937 to drive the entire Arab community out of Palestine. Since that is a violation of international law and a crime against humanity, both the plan and the action were, for many years, denied.[23] The massive exodus of the Palestinians was blamed on orders by Arab military commanders or on Arab propaganda. Where Jewish attacks could not be denied, as in the massacre of the village of Deir Yassin on April 10, 1948, five weeks before the end of the mandate, they were officially described as tragic accidents. Due to the research in the Israeli archives by two Israelis, we now know that Deir Yassin was neither an accident nor an isolated event but was rather one event among scores of others in a carefully constructed campaign that was designed to ethnically cleanse Palestine.[24] In the campaign, approximately eight hundred thousand villagers were driven from their homes. It was the most complete destruction of a community known anywhere up to that time. It made the *colon* seizure of the land of Algeria from its people pale by comparison. It was also the clearest

example of the impact of a people from the North on a people living in the South. The later Israeli prime minister Golda Meir went so far as to deny even the existence of the Palestinians. As she is quoted as saying,

> There was no such thing as Palestinians. It was not as though there was a Palestinian people in Palestine considering itself as a Palestinian people and we came and threw them out and took their country away from them. They did not exist.[25]

The story of the Palestinians is far from over. I will take up further aspects of it later, but now I turn to the events leading to the transformation of the long-lasting and often great empire of which Palestine was a part, the Ottoman Empire that was to give birth to Turkey.

CHAPTER 21

Turkey and Atatsürk

Known everywhere as Atatürk, “father of the Turk,” a title given to him by the Turkish Parliament in 1934, Mustafa Kemal was born in 1881 in Salonika, then an Ottoman city in what is now Greece. He began his military career in a secondary military school when he was twelve years old, and by the time he was twenty-four, like many young Ottoman officers, he was already involved in clandestine political opposition to the Ottoman regime. On the same day he graduated from the staff college, he was arrested by the political police but, after some weeks in prison, was let off with a warning and returned to the army. He did not heed the warning, and, upon being posted to Damascus, he helped to found one of the many secret societies that permeated the Ottoman army.[1]

Although he was young when he began his underground activities, Mustafa Kemal was a member of what might be thought of as the second generation. Officers (who became his teachers and would become his rivals) and cadets had been active in plotting the overthrow of the Ottoman government since the early 1890s. One group of officers tried to pull off a coup d’état against the sultan in 1896. The coup failed because one of the members was tricked into revealing the plan. All the conspirators were arrested. Surprisingly, they were not executed but were scattered throughout the empire to prevent them from further coordination. For the regime, that was a serious mistake: they would spread their nationalistic ideas and reformist ideals widely.

As the failure of the plot makes clear, people have a tendency to brag about their importance, which is easiest to do by showing inside knowledge. And, conversely, an easy way to get information is to cast doubt on the other person’s importance or pretend to sympathize with him.[2] Secrecy is always the absolute operational requirement for underground activities. In governmental affairs, leaks can be embarrassing, but among underground or subversive organizations, a

breach of security can result in death. So both overt and covert organizations spend vast amounts of time, energy, and money to keep their activities from being known. A usual way for governments and their enemies to protect themselves is to restrict sensitive information to those who need to know it while denying it to those who do not require it. Numbers are key: as Benjamin Franklin famously quipped, "Three can keep a secret if two of them are dead." In the pages to follow we will see several failures to heed Franklin's warning.

Both governments and their enemies employ other means to protect themselves. The use of ciphers goes back at least to ancient Greece, but they are vulnerable and can protect only documents.[3] To protect information that is verbal, physical, or shown by acts, the more effective means of protection is the motivation of the holders of sensitive information not to reveal it. The aim is to impress on those who are privy to secrets their duty to protect what they know. This is commonly achieved through ceremonial means such as oath taking and rituals.

In clandestine organizations, such rituals are made as dramatic as possible. As might be expected, the southern Italians and particularly the Sicilians led the way. We are familiar, at least from the cinema, with the blood oath of the Mafia. In earlier years, and still to a lesser degree today, the Freemasons practiced comparable rituals. In the nineteenth century, the Italian secret society of the Carbonari set a fashion that was to influence the Turkish revolutionaries with elaborate ceremonials. As new members were recruited, they were subjected to dramatic experiences that both tested their loyalty and aimed to ensure its continuation.

The officers who formed the organization known as the Young Turks, the Society of Union and Progress,[4] added to oath-taking ceremonies two other safeguards: First, they required that would-be recruits endure a period of waiting and observation. Second, they organized their members in cells. Each cell was made up of four or five members, of whom only one was in touch with a guide or leader.[5] The way they were applied by the Young Turks explains why, in this formative period of Turkish nationalism, there is so little information. Mustafa Kemal and the officers who came to the fore in the Society of Union and Progress spoke mainly to one another. Of what they said, we know little, but we do know that they all were impressed by and acted in the terms set forth by Ziya Gökalp, the recognized ideologue of Türkçelük, an Ottoman Turkish word that was transformed in modern Turkish into *Türkizm*.

As set forth in his writing and lecturing, Gökalp's Türkizm (which I discussed in Chapter 16) was anchored to a linguistic base. People who are "Turks" have become such because, from their infancy, they

have been conditioned by the repetition of stories, rhymes, and fairy tales in the Turkish language. As they mature, they adopt conventions and beliefs that both set them apart from others and unite them with people who share those conventions and beliefs. Their national identity is not racial as such but, by being culturally restricted, also becomes, in practice, focused on and largely confined to a specific group that we and they call Turks. It also is not based, as most nineteenth-century European notions of nationalism were, on intellectual choice: a Turk is a Turk not because someone has convinced him to be Turkish but because of a formative process over which he has had little control. Thus, we would look in vain for a body of nationalist literature aiming to persuade the public: nationalism was the outcome of the circumstances in which the person was born, grew, and functioned. Not fully articulated until the end of the First World War, Türkizm became the ideology, if that term is not too exact, for the movement that led to the replacement of the Ottoman Empire, a multinational state, by Turkey, a theoretically uniform, secular state. That state became personified by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

Offsetting this sense of identity was another, traditional definition based on religion. It was the "way" of the Ottoman Empire, which, from its beginning, was necessarily a polyglot, multicultural collection of diverse "nations." In Ottoman practice, as in Islamic law, these *millets,* as non-Muslim ethnic or religious groups are known in Turkish, were quasi-autonomous. Their institutions existed parallel to but separate from the governing institutions to which they owed the payment of taxes, the maintenance of a reasonable degree of public security, and the avoidance of threatening involvement in foreign affairs. Members of the various millets did not serve in the armed forces and were not expected to feel or exhibit loyalty to the state or to Turks. The dominant "nation" was the Muslim community. The Muslims did not think of it as a millet. It was the regime, the society, the state, and the army. Non-Turkish Muslims were part of it. Although distinctions were certainly drawn between Turks, Arabs, Berbers, Kurds, Circassians, and others, they all participated in the institutions of the Muslim "nation." They were "Ottomans" and did not have separate institutions. That, as I have pointed out, was why the Palestinian Muslim community had had no experience in separately managing its own affairs as had the various Christian millets. Ottoman institutions ran the army, the police, the schools, the mosques, and all other public institutions.

Ottomans generally regarded the Islamic basis of the empire as sacrosanct. Even those young officers who became known as "the Young Turks" and who wanted to transform the sultanate (that is, its

worldly components) were determined to preserve the essence of the caliphate (its religious components). Reading their pronouncements and other writings, it is clear that they did not draw sharp distinctions between what was traditionally known as din wa dunya—religious belief and action, as opposed to worldly concerns. That was not a new concept; rather, it had been inherent in Islam since Muhammad ruled Madinah.

Among the new generation of Turkish activists, the best-known leader was Ismail Enver. He would fight the Italians in Libya and the breakaway European states in the First Balkan War (October 1912 to May 1913), and he would become the de facto ruler of the empire during the First World War and be its most vigorous upholder. Indeed, he married into the royal family. When the empire collapsed, he would lead the "army of Islam" into the Caucasus and on to Central Asia when the Russian Revolution seemed to give an opening to restore the Ottoman Empire. He was killed by Red Army troops in 1922 in Muslim Central Asia, whereas Atatürk mobilized the new Turkish nation in Anatolia. They, their careers, and their followers can be seen to represent the two wings of the transition from religion-based Ottomanism to secular nationalist Turkey. Enver was the Islamic Ottomanist and Atatürk, the Turkish nationalist. That is a convenient way to look at them, but at the time, their careers and their ideas overlapped. Both spent much of their lives fighting for the Ottoman Empire.

It has long been fashionable to categorize the Ottoman Empire as the tyrannical and corrupt "sick man" of Europe, but that description is exaggerated. The non-Turkish population was accorded a degree of freedom and security far beyond what minorities experienced in much of contemporary Christian Europe, and although it was poor in trained men and money, it was able to control inexpensively a vast heterogeneous area. That was a feat beyond the capacity of its far richer successors.

When he began his military service, young Mustafa Kemal was not impressed by the virtues of the empire. In his view, it was a brake that slowed moves toward modernization and stopped the achievement of power. He shared the European view of its government as the sick man of Europe. That would remain his conviction throughout his life. So, from the start, he became active in forming groups or committees of his fellow officers to overthrow it.

When he began seriously to undertake clandestine activities, Mustafa Kemal was stationed in Syria. He found that frustrating because the more sophisticated and active conspirators were stationed far away in Salonika; so, at considerable risk, he decided to travel there, absent without leave from his post. There was no safe way to

make the trip. If he went by the shortest route, he would have had to pass through Istanbul, where he would likely have been identified, so he smuggled himself through Egypt. And once he got to Salonika, he had to stay long enough to convince the more experienced Turkish officers stationed there that he was not a spy but rather a potentially valuable recruit. That could not have been easy because what he was trying to find out was precisely what they did not want anyone to learn: how they organized themselves and how they planned to operate. He did not have much time. To stay long in the city where had been born and had relatives was to risk exposure. He nearly got caught. During the four months he allowed himself, he was said to have been spotted by the security police. Alarmed, he rushed back to his post in Syria. There, his army colleagues, who must have been eager to hear what he had learned, protected him from the police.

But Salonika was where the action was, and he managed to get himself transferred there. He was right. The members of the Society of Union and Progress were actively preparing for the 1908 movement against Sultan Abdülhamid II. He immediately joined them and played a minor role in the coup. When it succeeded, he found that he disagreed with the committee's leaders. They wanted to reform the empire, while he wanted to create a different sort of state. This fundamental disagreement could have had serious consequences for him, but it seems that the committee members were constrained from disciplinary action by camaraderie. Instead of being purged, he was sent away for a brief tour of duty in Libya in 1908.

When he returned from Libya, he must have been forgiven because he next served as chief of staff to the expedition that put down an attempted countercoup. But his assignments over the next few years suggest that the coup leaders intended to keep him away from the center of power. No posting was exactly demeaning, but none placed him, as later biographers always did, in a position of importance. His first serious military assignment came only after three years, when he was returned to Libya to fight against the Italian invasion.

The best formations of the Ottoman army were naturally at the places of greatest danger—on the Balkan-Russian frontier—and all that the Turks could spare to confront the Italians in Libya were a few officers and a small contingent of Turkish troops that had been left there from before the war. Even that force could not be supplied or reinforced because the Italian navy interdicted the approaches to Libya and the British closed the land route from Syria through Egypt. In fact, Mustafa Kemal and other Turkish officers had to sneak into Libya

disguised as bedouin. Once Mustafa Kemal got there, he found the Italians were much better armed and supplied. They also had a few airplanes that, although primitive, could provide real-time intelligence and even drop bombs. Mustafa Kemal learned about air power painfully: the explosion of one Italian bomb nearly blinded him. His orders were to whip the bedouin followers of the Sanusi brotherhood into an army. He managed that task successfully enough to win several small engagements and even held the city of Derna against determined and repeated Italian assaults—held it, that is, until the Ottoman government, hard pressed by its former subjects in the Balkans, decided to give up Libya. That must have been a bitter decision for the ambitious young officer.

Like the other Turkish officers, Mustafa Kemal was rushed back to take part in what are known as the First and Second Balkan Wars. Still only a *binbashi* (roughly equivalent to a major), he was stationed at the gateway from the Mediterranean opening onto the Ottoman capital. The Turkish straits had long been recognized as the choke point of the Ottoman Empire. It was on the Gallipoli Peninsula that in 1915 and 1916 he would make his reputation by defeating an Anglo-French invasion.

The Gallipoli campaign was one of the most important battles of all time. Apparently Mustafa Kemal saw it as the defense of the Ottoman capital. The British, French, and Russians saw it in quite a different light. The huge Russian army was holding down German formations that, if they could be redeployed to the Western front, might overwhelm the already hard-pressed and sorely depleted French and British armies. British and French strategists thought that keeping the Russians fighting was the difference between certain defeat and possible victory. But the Russian army was disintegrating. Indeed, it was starving. Consequently, the British believed that they absolutely had to break their way through the straits. The Ottoman forces under Mustafa Kemal were determined to prevent them. They did. As I pointed out previously, although no one could have known at the time, the Ottoman closure of the straits was a direct cause of the Russian Revolution because the blocking of the supply route prevented food, arms, and equipment from reaching the Russian forces, who, starving and dispirited, stopped fighting and walked home. Had America not entered the war on the Allied side, Germany might have won. Small though the battle was, it cost the lives of over one hundred thousand men and wounded over two hundred thousand, almost equally divided among the Turkish defenders and the British and French attackers. It was at Gallipoli that Mustafa Kemal became a Turkish national hero.

Young Ottoman Army captiontain Mustafa Kemal (*front left*), who later was to hold off the British attack on Constantinople (Istanbul) at the great siege of Gallipoli, leads Sanusi Libyan tribesmen against the Italians at the Battle of Tripoli in 1912. He created the Turkish Republic and was given the title Atatürk.

As the war ended, Mustafa Kemal suffered, along with many Turkish officers, the humiliation of the Allied occupation of Istanbul, but it was the Greek invasion of Anatolia that propelled him back into combat. With the Ottoman army largely demobilized and the officer corps scattered, he began to build a new kind of force, a national resistance army. He announced his goals in a proclamation, the National Pact, that caused the interim Ottoman government, under Allied pressure, to call for his arrest and execution. At least two attempts were made to murder him, one of which was orchestrated by British intelligence.[6]

Undeterred, he added a political dimension to his activities. He assembled an unofficial national congress that elected him its leader. Using the congress as a rump political party, he and his colleagues ran for election to the legally recognized parliament. In the election they won an overwhelming majority and used it to pass into law the National Pact. In response, the British military government immediately dissolved the parliament. Instead of giving up, Mustafa Kemal moved to create a free organization, out from under Allied control, the Grand National Assembly, in the ancient and still-rustic city of Ankara. That may be taken as the real beginning of his public political life.

Because of the reverential view of Mustafa Kemal expressed by later commentators, it is difficult to judge precisely how much his actions represented the views of other Turks. What is clear is that his moves were approved by enough people that he was able to enroll an army, organize a rudimentary government, defeat the Franco-Armenian armed forces in the east and the Greek army in the west, and force the victorious Allied army of occupation and their local allies to retreat. On July 24, 1923, these victories led the Allies to conclude the Treaty of Lausanne, which recognized the Grand National Assembly as the government of Turkey. Certainly from that time, if not before, he effectively represented the people of Turkey.

As he looked back on these events and his decision to abolish the caliphate-sultanate and establish the republic in his famous six-day-long speech in 1927, he opened by sketching out the conditions in which his campaign to build a new Turkey began. Surely no political leader began a successful career with such disadvantages: “The Ottoman Army had been crushed on every front. An armistice had been signed under severe conditions. The prolongation of the Great War had left the people exhausted and impoverished. . . . The Army had been deprived of their arms and ammunition. . . . The Entente Powers did not consider it necessary to respect the terms of the armistice.”[7] He went on to describe the occupation of the country. The major provinces were garrisoned by the British, the French, and the Italians. The Greeks then invaded from the southwest at Izmir. As he explained, “Foreign officers and officials and their special [intelligence] agents were very active everywhere.”[8] An Anglo-French-Armenian military force was working in collaboration with the Greeks, and a number of organizations were formed under Allied protection to break Anatolia into different provinces. And, of course, the empire outside Anatolia was being split into Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Arabia, and Yemen. Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco were already gone.

Mustafa Kemal’s personal style and his regime’s character for the next decade were typified by his seizure of full power: “You [the members of the Grand National Assembly] might, perhaps, be inclined to ask why those who sent me to Anatolia with the idea of banishing me from Istanbul entrusted me with such wide powers [as I had]. The answer is, that they did not know themselves what they were doing . . . I dictated the order giving me full powers.”[9] He thus gave himself the power and authority to do what he thought needed to be done for Turkey. This would take him into all the activities we ascribe to nation building but would be anchored in his conception of national sovereignty. As he recounted the overthrow of the former regime,

> Neither sovereignty nor the right to govern can be transferred by one person

> to anybody else by an academic debate. Sovereignty is acquired by force, by power and by violence. . . . It is now the nation that revolts against these usurpers [the Ottoman sultans], puts them in their right place and actually carries on their sovereignty. This is an actual fact. It is no longer a question of knowing whether we want to leave this sovereignty in the hands of the nation or not. It is simply a question of stating an actuality, something which is already an accomplished fact and which must be accepted unconditionally as such. And this must be done at any price.[10]

The price was not simply the changed role of the "nation" in sovereignty; it involved changing the society in the most minute details. As Mustafa Kemal went on,

> Gentlemen, it was necessary to abolish the fez, which sat on our heads as a sign of ignorance, of fanaticism, of hatred to progress and civilisation, and to adopt in its place the hat, the customary headdress of the whole civilised world, thus showing among other things that no difference existed in the manner of thought between the Turkish nation and the whole family of civilised mankind.[11]

The time of "great men" had come. Like Atatürk, leaders had come to be seen as the embodiment of nations. When we think of Russia, it is Joseph Stalin whose image appears in our minds; so Adolf Hitler emerges as representative of Germany; Benito Mussolini, of Italy; Franklin D. Roosevelt, of America; and Winston Churchill, of England. In Iran, it is the relatively unknown figure of Reza Shah, to whom I now turn.

CHAPTER 22

Reza Shah of Iran

When the First World War ended, most of Iran was under British military occupation. Germany wanted to cut off the flow of oil to the Royal Navy and sent to Iran an agent to perform like Lawrence of Arabia. Wilhelm Wassmuss failed because Germany could not support him as Britain supported Lawrence, but he captured the spirit of his task better than Lawrence. As he announced it to the Bakhtiari tribesmen whom he was trying to forge into a guerrilla force to shut down the flow of petroleum to the Royal Navy,

> O Persians, now is the time to give yourselves to the Holy Cause. If you shrink from the sacrifice, when the whole of Islam is threatened by the infidel enemy, what will your answer be to the Prophet on the Day of Judgment?[1]

The British were alarmed. If they lost access to Iranian oil, they might lose the war because, as the great British imperialist Lord Curzon later said, they "floated to victory on a wave of oil." To foil Wassmuss, they offered a reward for him, dead or alive, of what was to the poor nomads a vast treasure; even though the reward was vast, the British also created one of those native military forces that by then was common all over the Muslim world. This was the six-thousand-man South Persia Rifles. To stimulate recruitment, the British offered uniforms, money, and rifles to the hungry tribesmen. Those tactics would become the essence of counterinsurgency in our times. In Iran they worked. Wassmuss's appeal to religious patriotism was defeated by greed.

While German efforts to raise Iranian tribesmen had failed, they showed that British interests would be endangered by an independent Iran. Access to cheap oil had now joined the preservation of the Indian empire as one of Britain's "vital" interests. British statesmen had long envisaged a grand strategy of imperialism. What the British wanted was a belt of colonies and vassal states stretching from Tibet across Central Asia to the Mediterranean. They thought that control of this

area would protect Britain's Indian empire. Oil now made its achievement seem urgent. What the British wanted was echoed forty years later by the American creation of the Baghdad Pact, but the Americans tried a somewhat more subtle approach: in place of the British emphasis on domination, they spoke in terms of alliances. Both tactics were designed to isolate the area from penetration by rival European powers. This was what Britain aimed to do in an agreement imposed on Iran in 1919. But Britain then, like America when it was guided by Secretary of State John Foster Dulles after the Second World War, failed to understand or credit trends of opinion and actions in the South. As the English historian and diplomat Gavin Hambly has written,

> What was wholly unappreciated in London was that the events of the past two decades had effectively destroyed whatever credibility Great Britain had once enjoyed in Iran. On the contrary, hostility towards her was now being expressed with an intensity reflecting the fervour of the new, xenophobic nationalism, which had hitherto passed unnoticed by British officials in the Middle East, accustomed to the old, easy pre-war world of the Victorian and Edwardian *Pax Britannica.*[2]

The events of this period come to focus on one man. Often compared to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Reza Khan, as he was known in his early years, partly created and then rode the wave of Iranian nationalism. Just as Atatürk was doing in Turkey, Reza set about making Iran into a modern secular state. The obstacles the two leaders faced were similar: foreign invaders and domestic conservatives. For Reza the objective was to remove the potential for resistance from the combination of clerics, bazaar merchants, and tribal leaders and to create at the center of the regime a new group of nationalists who would support his regime. But the roads to this goal taken by Reza were different from those trod by Atatürk.

Reza was born in 1878, just three years before Atatürk, in a village in the mountains overlooking the Caspian Sea. Little is known of his childhood since he tried to obscure the humble reality and replace it with a royal myth. What is known is that his father died shortly after his birth and his mother took him to live with relatives in Tehran. He began to emerge from obscurity only when he was about sixteen. Then he enlisted in the Russian-officered Cossack brigade that the tsar had given or lent to the then shah. Unlike Atatürk, he had no formal military training and was not a member of the national army, but he acquired the then highly regarded skill of handling the Maxim machine gun, which has been called "the weapon most associated with British imperial conquest."[3]

His skill with this weapon got him an addition to his name: he began to be called Reza-i Maxim. His skill and determination were

noticed by the Russian commanders, and he began his move upward among the Cossacks. But, like most of the Iranians with whom he consorted, he began to resent the Russians. The coming of the Russian Revolution in 1917 gave him an opportunity to move against them and to win approval from their enemies, the British. He leapt at the chance. He accused his commander of being pro-Communist. That was the first step in what became a purge. Three years later, when the British had extended their rule to northern Iran, they ordered the shah to dismiss all the Russian officers.

But the British needed a local military force in the north. There, pro-Communist separatist guerrillas known as the Jangalis had established themselves in Gilan province along the Caspian Sea. The British wanted to suppress them, but they lacked the manpower. They needed their South Persia Rifles to guard the oil installations, so they decided to enlist a new native army in the north. They picked Reza as the commander, and he drew on the Cossacks for his troops. Then, with British money, arms, and permission, the young and ambitious Reza—like Benito Mussolini in his march on Rome—marched on Tehran. In Tehran, there was a large contingent of Swedish-officered gendarmes who had been recruited to protect the shah, but the British ordered their commanders not to interfere with Reza's activities. The British also "advised" the shah to accept Reza's arrival as a coup d'état and to appoint him as head of what was designated to be the national army.

Shrewdly, Reza merged into his Cossack force the gendarmerie (minus its Swedish officers), and, in a series of carefully chosen campaigns in which he was confident of success, he built the morale and competence of his force. One after another, he defeated dissident groups. In the north he took Tabriz, which was seeking independence as Azadistan, and killed the leader of the Azad Party; then he gave the final blow to the Gilan pro-Soviet regime; and finally, turning to the area inland from the Persian Gulf, he "pacified" the great tribal groups.[4] By this time, Reza commanded an army of about forty thousand men. To prevent the tribes from establishing a rival force, as tribesmen frequently had done in the past, he began conscripting their young men into his army.

No issue was too small for his eye. He decided that every detail of Iranian life must be put to work to foster a national spirit or abolished. Some of his orders seemed to outsiders trivial or at least irrelevant, but he did not think so. Among them, Reza required all Iranians to adopt a Western-style family name. He chose for himself the name "Pahlavi," which he thought would tie him to the rulers of ancient Iran. (That was a theme he would pass along to his son Muhammad Reza, who would later celebrate the "Twenty-Fifth

Hundred Year" anniversary of Iran.) And he ordered the wearing of Western dress and banned the use of the veil for women.

Briefly, following Atatürk, he thought of turning Iran into a republic, but he discovered that the Iranian clergy had been outraged by Atatürk's attack on Islam and had made the word "republic" unpopular. So, in 1925, Reza arranged that the by-then-well-disciplined Parliament abolish the Qajar dynasty and "elect" him shah. That won him favor with the religious establishment, but he had come to see that the clerics had more power than he thought safe, so his next step was to weaken them. He first banned their leaders from visiting his palace. That destroyed both the reality of their influence and, more important, the appearance of it. Merchants stopped using them as intermediaries and paying them. He then struck at the traditional sources of their wealth. In the year of his coronation he created Western-style secular law courts to replace religious courts, as it was the clerical establishment's service as judges in Islamic courts that had been their source of power and wealth. Then he broke their hold on education. Secular education of the young would be handled by a government department. And, as the new educational system took hold and students began to advance to the upper levels, he created a secular national university. At the same time, he confiscated the wealth of the pious foundations through which the clergy handled social welfare. He thought, and most of the observers of Iran agreed, that the day of the religious established had ended. The 1978 revolution would demonstrate how wrong they were. But at the time, he seemed to have emerged triumphant over all his potential domestic enemies.

Then, having disposed of his domestic enemies, Reza turned to deal with the "British state within the Iranian state," the Anglo-Persian Oil Company. Run as virtually a separate country, the oil company was Iran's major industry and largest employer. But it paid very little to Iran for the oil it pumped out of Iran's ground. Reza determined to take it over, and in 1932 he announced that he was canceling the concession under which it operated.

The concession was not simply a commercial agreement. The company was controlled by the British government. The heart of imperialism, it affected Iran just as the British East India Company in its heyday had dominated India. It was central to Iranian-British relations: without control of it, Iran would never be independent, but, without its production of wealth, Britain would be a poor state. At least that was what both governments thought. So Reza moved (cautiously) to enforce his edict while the British reacted (furiously) to humiliate him. The British, as they would do in the Abadan crisis of thirty years later—and as the United States would do during the

George W. Bush administration—sent a naval flotilla to the Persian Gulf. “Gunboat diplomacy” worked. Reza “blinked.” He agreed to give the British oil company sixty additional years.

Despite this retreat, slowly but surely, Iran was coming together as a modern state, with each year a larger proportion of its citizens achieving educations, becoming more prosperous, and increasingly thinking of themselves as citizens of the nation. Then, progress came to a sudden halt when the Second World War began.

Misreading the realities of power, Reza thought he could stand aside from two traditional imperialist enemies and, like Turkey, remain neutral. He had a rude awakening. British and Russian forces invaded Iran on August 25, 1941, and sent Reza off into exile. As a sop to Iranian pride, they agreed to replace him on his throne by his son Muhammad. The young prince was cautioned to do as he was told and not interfere with their activities. Those activities amounted to using Iran, under their control, as a channel to send supplies, arms, and food to the embattled Soviet Union. They had learned the lesson of Gallipoli. This time Russia was saved. Meanwhile, in Iran itself, the war period was the time of the North’s absolute dominance. This time, Britain and Russia were joined by the United States.

I turn now to another result of Northern imperialism: the breakup of India. The experience of Muslims in India that led to the formation of Pakistan must be traced over a longer period and with consideration of more than one man, but, as I will show, Muhammad Ali Jinnah’s role in the formation of the new state of Pakistan can be compared with those of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Turkey and Reza Shah Pahlavi in Iran.

CHAPTER 23

Islam in India and the Formation of Pakistan

Following the purge of troops, the massacres of hundreds of thousands of Muslim villagers, and the destruction of the pitiful remains of the once-powerful Mughal Empire in India's first war of independence, the so-called mutiny of 1857–1858, the British rulers determined to reorganize India. The East India Company had run its course, and a more stable relationship with the British government had to be forged. How to accomplish that was a severe challenge. The British had learned that there were few Indians they could rely on to dominate the rest. Their immediate concern was the army.

Before the revolt, the army of India was composed of 232,224 Indian and 45,522 English troops, or roughly five Indians for each European; over the next five years, the Indian component was reduced by roughly half, while the number of English soldiers was increased, so that there were two Indians—"black men," as the British called them—for each "white man."[1] Units from "unreliable" communities were disbanded, and increased efforts were made to shift forces away from areas where they might have interests or loyalties and to garrison them in cantonments separate from civilian populations. These measures were fairly easy to carry out because the Indian army under the East India Company had been composed, regiment by regiment, on an ethnic or religious basis: Punjabis, for example, did not serve with Bengalis. That distribution was seen to have facilitated revolt, so the British decided to mix the regiments. No one formation was to be composed of a single ethnic, religious, or linguistic group, and Muslims were to be replaced as far as possible by other ethnic groups. All the troops were closely monitored to detect any signs of subversion. And the vanity of the troopers was to be assuaged by colorful uniforms, an increase in salaries, and more frequent decorations. Yet, in the half century following the 1857 uprising, there were at least sixty mutinies.[2]

Reading the records of the half century following 1857, I have been

struck by the contrast between the intensity of political activity on the Muslim-Hindu divide and the relative avoidance by the leadership of both communities of the issue of British imperialism. The British, of course, focused their attention on Indian challenges, relatively weak though they were, so this issue deserves attention. What emerges from the records is the following: British India was a garrison state. It spent at least three times as much of its revenue on the military—40 percent to 50 percent of all revenue—as on famine relief, irrigation, and education combined, and even in a "peaceful" year it employed as many as 50,000 troops on internal security and backed them up with more than 150,000 police and 50,000 armed constables. As George Orwell, who is better known for his powerful critique of Russian tyranny but who had served five years as a policeman in the Indian service, remarked, "The Indian Empire is a despotism, and the real backbone of the despotism is the army."[3] Or, as another English author commented, "After the Mutiny, with the enormous strengthening of the British regiments, India became an undisguised military dictatorship, and one which was in the end prohibitively expensive to maintain." [4]

As the English commander in chief remarked, Indians were, at best, "children." When they "got out of line," they must be "smacked." This was because the "black man [that is, the Indian] is fundamentally different in mentality from the white."[5] "Smacking" was spelled out in the 1864 Whipping Act. The number of Indians who were flogged rarely fell below 20,000 and in one year reached 75,223.

"Against Orientals it was essential to show force at once," remarked a British general in 1921.[6] And, as I have pointed out, in the entire social, political, and cultural context of British India, from housing, clubs, and social intercourse to food and clothing, the English made their contempt for the Indians manifest. As the English philosopher John Stuart Mill, who worked for the East India Company for thirty-five years, wrote of the English imperialists, "Armed with the prestige and filled with the scornful over-bearingness of the conquering nation, they have the feelings inspirited by the sense of absolute power without the sense of responsibility. . . . They think the people of the country mere dirt under their feet."[7] Yet Mill argued that imperialism was justified because the natives were hardly human.

Mill's conflicting attitudes were reduced to simple terms by Warren Hastings (the Marquess of Hastings) in his diary for October 2, 1813, when he took up his post as the governor-general of India. As he wrote, "The Hindoo appears a being nearly limited to mere animal functions, and even in them indifferent. Their proficiency and skill . . . are little more than the dexterity which any animal with similar conformation [has], but with no higher intellect than a dog, and an

elephant, or a monkey."[8] And toward the end of the century, in 1883, a noted member of the English aristocracy, William Scrawen Blunt, was told that he could not receive even an Indian raja, the prince of Lakhnau, because if he did the resident English families would move out.[9]

What is particularly surprising is that most of the Muslim and Hindu elite seemed unaffected by the widely known and frequently expressed attitude of their British rulers. Arguably, the English contempt did not affect the vast majority of Indians because they were rural and rarely met English men or women. The Hindu social order, the caste system, had accustomed the poor to oppression, and, even before British rule, the mass of the people were divided by language, religion, ethnicity, and poor communications. The British built these preexisting conventions into their system of rule. They were careful to keep the Indians in illiteracy and poverty. But still it remains difficult to understand the lack of effective resistance on the part of the elite or the religious establishments.

I find that a major reason is that the vast majority of Indians were kept in deep poverty. A glance over photographs of the century beginning in 1858 shows a population gripped by hunger. Only the rich were fat; the poor were often emaciated, and the vast majority of the Indians were poor or very poor. Hunger was so common that large numbers of people sold themselves into slavery to keep from starving. The colonial government not only allowed such desperate moves but actually participated in them by encouraging what was euphemistically called "indentured labor" and by using its military power to prevent any challenge to the system by, for example, demonstrations against excessive taxes. Maintenance of the system required severe measures. As Bombay's governor stated in 1875, "We hold India by the sword."[10] British India had a political police establishment that was rivaled only by that of Russia.

Apart from expenditures on the army and the security forces, the government was very lean. Practically nothing was done in public health or even in famine relief. In the second half of the century, under direct British rule after the abolition of the company, India suffered twenty-four famines in which it was thought that about twenty million people, or nearly one in ten Indians, starved to death. Today, it is believed that the total may have reached almost twice that number, about thirty-five million. India was indeed subjected to a colonial holocaust that killed perhaps as much as five to seven times the number of Jews and Roma killed by the Nazis in the better-known holocaust. Britain has never apologized or offered compensation—if there could be any compensation—either for the deaths or, more importantly, for the fact that during the famines it even forbade relief.

Yet few people today, even in India, know the extent of the killing or the policy that caused it.[11]

Just keeping above the level of starvation was so exhausting a task that rebellion was almost unthinkable. And the colonial government was determined to keep it that way. As the Indian scholars R. C. Majumdar and K. K. Datta have written,

> There is no doubt that the promotion of trade, industry, and manufacture of the Indians would have been the most effective remedy against famine. But it clashed directly with the interests of Britain. . . . [So] the British government used its political power to stifle even the infant industry and manufacture which the Indians tried to set up against heavy odds. . . . While the ruin of manufacture and industry forced the masses to take to agriculture as the only means of support, the heavy [taxes on] land revenue filled the cup of their misery. . . . [In the pursuit of revenue] even during famines, the government allowed or encouraged the export of food grains. During the period from 1849 to 1914, the value of exports increased "twenty-two times over."[12]

Disregard for the common people extended also to the upper reaches of Indian society. During Lord Curzon's time as viceroy, from 1898 to 1905, India reached what has been called the "apogee of imperial theory."[13] Every detail of the lives of even the maharajas of quasi-independent states was regulated and they were closely monitored by resident "advisers," whose advice they had to accept. They could not travel from their principalities without British permission. Curzon considered them "merely the agents of the Crown in the administration of their territory."[14] After the 1857 mutiny, in which they played no part, and as long as they did as they were told, they were treated as ornaments to the raj and allowed their often trivial pastimes, their toys, their jewels, their elaborately caparisoned elephants, and their palaces.

The British government did little in the field of education. After roughly a century of British rule, Curzon told Parliament in 1892, "At the present time the population of British India is 221,000,000; and of that number it has been calculated that not more than from three to four per cent can read or write any one of their native tongues; considerably less than one per cent.—about one-fourth or one-third [of a percent]—can read or write English."[15] The records are incomplete, but one statistic is revealing: when the company was trying to get Indians of sufficient education to work in its bureaucracy because they were less expensive than imported Englishmen, "the returns of 1852, for example, showed that only two gazetted [commissioned] officers [in all of India] had come from the government colleges."[16]

So obvious was the British lack of commitment to educating Indians that even the program that Thomas Babington Macaulay had set out in

1835 to “English” a class of Indians who would serve the British as clerks and administrators had never been adequately funded. I suspect that those who directed government policy recognized the danger it posed. Macaulay had thought the spread of English would create, as he put it, a small class of Indians, “English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect,” who would help the British run India, but Macaulay’s policy would have changed the environment in which British imperialism operated.[17] Had he remembered his Shakespeare, he would have been warned. Shakespeare dramatically laid out in *The Tempest* the sequence of steps in the course of the imposition of imperialism. Reading it might have saved or at least prolonged the British Empire; it is worth our attention.

In *The Tempest* (act 1, scene 2), Shakespeare portrayed the British view of the role of African or Asian natives in his character Caliban. Shakespeare has his lordly European Prospero say of Caliban,

> He does make our fire,
> Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
> That profit us. What, ho! Slave! Caliban!

And Caliban, subservient, details his role, but finally he is driven beyond endurance and says,

> This island’s mine . . .
> Which thou takest from me. When thou camest first,
> Thou strokedst me, and madest much of me . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . and then I loved thee,
> And show’d thee all the qualities o’ th’ isle,
> The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:
> Cursed be I that I did so! . . .
> . . . . . .
> For I am all the subjects that you have,
> Which first was mine own king: and here you sty me
> In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
> The rest o’ th’ island.

Infuriated by this threat of subversion, Prospero speaks for generations of imperialists:

> Thou most lying slave,
> Whom stripes may move, not kindness! . . .
> . . . . . .
> . . . I pitied thee,
> Took pains to make thee speak, taught thee each hour

> One thing or other; when thou didst not, savage,
> Know thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like
> A thing most brutish.

To which Caliban answered, as generations of Indians, Algerians, Indonesians, Tatars, and Chechens have answered,

> You taught me language; and my profit on 't
> Is, I know how to curse. The red plague rid you
> For learning me your language!

Shakespeare's vision of the evolution of imperialism was not appreciated in British India. The rulers accepted support wherever they found it, not gratefully but as their right. Those who did not support British rule were apt to be imprisoned or executed; the only tolerated public figures were those who advocated submission to British rule. The most prominent and most tolerated figure among the Muslim community was Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan.

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan had been a member of the Mughal establishment before the revolt and had worked for the British East India Company. He had been, in Indian terms, "knighted" by the emperor and was appointed a judge by the company. In his view, the Mughals were but a memory of a glorious past, while the company was the current reality and the hope of the future. That hope, he believed, could be brought to fruition only if his fellow Muslims recognized reality by cooperating with the British and by educating themselves. These became the twin objectives of his life. Much of his thought and energy went into the creation of schools and, in 1873, the founding of the Anglo-Muhammadan Oriental College.[18] That generations of young Muslims were offered a Western-style education was largely due to him.

A highly educated man, conversant in several Western and Eastern languages, he seems to have read his Shakespeare. Whether or not he had, he is generally agreed to have planted the seeds of British India's destruction by encouraging the growth of education, but for nearly half a century after his death, many—I believe most—prominent Muslims would live relatively happily in India. Despite the humiliations they suffered, the upper crust prospered from its great wealth. Among them was the Aga Khan.

Aga Khan III worked on the principle set out by ancient strategists. "Know your enemy," they urged. "Then in a thousand battles will come a thousand victories." He shrewdly sized up his enemy. He realized that the bureaucrats who appeared so lordly in India were usually just middle-class Englishmen.[19] The best strategy was to avoid

them. Then he found that the English aristocracy regarded them as minor public servants. So, rather than deal with them, he determined to go over their heads, directly to the real rulers of India, who were not in India but in England. Whereas in British India, despite his wealth and considerable intelligence, the Aga Khan was disparaged by even junior officers and civil servants as just a "wily oriental gentleman," a "wog"—or treated even more insultingly in other ways —in England, he was often a guest of the royal family. Judging by his papers and career, I think he shrewdly hit on a way to use his wealth: learning that English royals were addicted to horse racing, he made himself the leading member of the "horsy" circle around them, with Ascot as his embassy. Over the years, he came to feel more comfortable in England than in India, but he continued to play a major role in the Muslim community as a founder in 1906 of the Muslim League.

By origin a fellow Ismaili, Muhammad Ali Jinnah lacked the Aga Khan's wealth and wit, and by education and profession he was drawn into a different cut of English society and politics. An outstanding lawyer who had been educated in England, he could deal effectively with the people who ultimately controlled British policy toward India, those in the civil and foreign services. I believe that English officials felt more at home with him than with any other South Asian leader. He was reliable, a gentleman, "almost one of us."

Jinnah was indeed "almost one of us." He felt at home in London, matched the English deportment codes and dress in every particular, and spoke the language of the "mandarins" who ran the English government. Throughout his career his central objective was to find a way to ally the Muslim community with Britain. He supported Britain when it counted in the Second World War. But this comfortable relationship ended abruptly at war's end when the Labour Party came to power in Parliament. Then, Lord Louis Mountbatten became viceroy in India, and Lady Mountbatten began a love affair with the leader of the Hindu Congress, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Jinnah's relationship with the viceroy remained proper, but they were never cordial. It would have been difficult to discuss some aspects of British policy toward the Hindu Congress without treading on the presumed role of Lady Mountbatten in fostering Nehru's cause. Jinnah refused to make use of the indiscretion and realized that his diffidence weakened, fatally, as it turned out, his position. So, despite several attempts to avoid the partition of India, he moved to create Pakistan. That was an available option since the emotional origins of Pakistan had been set even earlier. Let me turn back to show how events had led to Jinnah's final position.

Already during the 1930s, at least emotionally, India was being

partitioned. In 1933, the man who might be called the Pakistani Theodor Herzl, Choudhary Rahmat Ali, wrote a pamphlet called *Now or Never* on the need for a Muslim homeland. Like Herzl, he coined a name for the hoped-for homeland. The name he created was "Pakistan." As Herzl did with Judenstaat, Ali built his program into the name. He formed the name from the letters of the areas he thought should be united under Islam: *P* came from Punjab, *A* from the Afghan Northwest Frontier Province, *K* from Kashmir, *S* from Sindh Province, and *tan* from Balochistan. The Persian word *pak* also had the advantage of meaning "pure," so Pakistan was to be the land of the true believers.

Neat though the play on words was, the reality was far from supportive. The central province, Punjab, was about half Hindu or Sikh; Kashmir had a Hindu maharaja lording over a still politically unsophisticated Muslim population; and millions of Muslims were scattered across the rest of India. Only in Bengal, which Ali did not mention, was there a homogeneous Muslim community. His was then still a lonely voice. Some Muslim leaders, notably Muhammad Iqbal, were still willing to have their community be part of a loose Indian federation as a British Empire dominion. As much as they disagreed with their British rulers, Muslims trusted them more than they did the Hindu Indians.

Accommodation was immediately undercut when the English government declared war on Nazi Germany.[20] Without consulting any of the Indian leaders, the viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, declared that India also was at war with Germany. While they were outraged at not being consulted on this fundamental "national" issue, the leaders of both Hindus and Muslims thought they saw a silver lining in that cloud. They thought—or at least hoped—that the British would be moved by the need to win Indian support for the English war effort to proclaim Indian independence. They were quickly disabused. Linlithgow summoned Mahatma Gandhi and Jinnah to inform them that there would be no further discussion of "devolution," the granting of Indian independence, until after the war. Winston Churchill rubbed salt into the wound of Linlithgow's statement two years later when he informed Parliament that the Atlantic Charter, which he and Franklin D. Roosevelt had proclaimed, did not apply to its empire in India. Both the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter and its fate were Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points all over again, a glorious statement of what the North never intended to do.

Sobered but unbowed, the Muslim leaders pressed ahead for some form of autonomy or independence. This culminated in the early days of the Second World War in the March 23, 1940, Lahore Resolution calling for a two-state solution. Perhaps another unconscious parallel

to Arab-Israeli affairs, it broke down before the ink was dry. The Hindu leaders of India's shadow government, the Congress, refused to accept the Lahore Resolution, and the British forbade discussion of any form of settlement until after the war.

During the war, Jinnah disagreed with the Hindu leadership on tactics and objectives. While continuing to demand independence, he supported the Allied side and, being out of prison, used the war years to enhance the power of the Muslim League. Among other efforts, he founded the first "Pakistani" newspaper, *Dawn,* which is still a major voice of that country.

Disappointed by the British refusal of their demands for liberty and annoyed by Muslim separatism, the Hindu-controlled Congress voted to begin a "quit India" campaign using nonviolence (*satyagraha*). Its decision was met by a severe British crackdown in which, among other things, the British applied an embargo or diversion of food supplies that is estimated to have cost about three million Indian lives.[21] They also arrested all the leaders of Congress they could catch, including Gandhi.

One of the inner group of Hindu leaders whom the British failed to catch, although they tried to assassinate him, was Subhas Chandra Bose. Bose made his way back to Asia, first in a German submarine to Madagascar (then ruled by the Vichy French), and from Madagascar in a Japanese submarine onward to Tokyo. He then was sent to Singapore. There he took command of the thirty thousand Indian troops whom the British had surrendered to the Japanese at the fall of Singapore. With this army he set out in March 1944 to actually do what all the other Indian leaders were only talking about: liberate India.[22] Frightened by the prospect of this assault, the British reversed course and offered the Indian leaders the possibility of eventual but still limited liberty. Both the Congress and the Muslim League found this inadequate. Meanwhile, Bose's army was bogged down in Burma on its way to India and broke up. The threat of the Japanese invasion of India ended.

Then a remarkable thing happened. With most of the Congress's leadership imprisoned and presumably out of communication, two leaders who were still at liberty, the Muslim Liaquat Ali Khan and the Hindu Bhulabhai Desai, carried on secret negotiations that resulted in a plan in which the Muslims would give up their demand for the creation of Pakistan in return for participation in government—that is, a single-state solution. When word was leaked of their negotiations in 1945, the newly freed Hindu leadership of the Congress immediately repudiated it. It was one of those fascinating "might have beens" that occasionally enliven history and sadden statesmen.[23]

In 1945, a new start was attempted. This time openly, and under

the sponsorship of the British viceroy, the whole senior leadership of Congress and the Muslim League met at the summer resort of Simla (also spelled Shimla) to consider a new round of proposals. That meeting broke up when the Congress's leaders demanded that the Hindu-controlled Congress—not the Muslim League—be authorized to choose the Muslim delegates. Thereafter the positions of both sides hardened: the Congress's leaders denied the right of the Muslim League to participate in government, and the Muslim League replied by reaffirming its demand for the creation of a separate state. The British proposed what the British-Indian and English governments thought was a compromise—much as the British had done in Egypt and were attempting to do in Palestine. India would become half a unified nation-state. Military and foreign affairs and a few other shared issues would be handled by a central government, while the provinces would be autonomous and would have the option of leaving the union. The Muslim League accepted the British offer, but the Hindu Congress rejected it.

At their wits' end, the newly elected English Labour Party and its government advisers decided to transfer power to two "dominions," India and Pakistan. Where populations were mixed (including Punjab and Bengal), plebiscites would be held. Remarkably, the viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, got Nehru, Jinnah, and the Punjabi Sikh leader together to announce the deal on the radio. Pakistan was about to be born. No one knew quite what that meant, but every move was ill omened.

Much too late, the British tried vainly in 1946 and 1947 to head off the collapse of civic order in what everyone now realized would no longer be a single state. A parliamentary commission again suggested a federal structure in which the rights of both communities could be protected under British control. To ensure Muslim acceptance, the British warned the Muslims that partition would create a small Pakistan that "in war and peace would be dependent on the good will of Hindustan."[24] That warning was not effective. Jinnah dismissed British proposals as double-dealing, while the Congress leader Nehru thought the plan unworkable and unacceptable. No strong leader was prepared to endorse the concept of Britain remaining in India in any guise. A dead end had been reached.

Order rapidly broke down, with the first intercommunal "Great Killing" occurring in Calcutta in August 1946; it was echoed throughout India in the following weeks. The violence unnerved the British government. Essentially giving up its attempts to work out a compromise, it reacted by inviting Nehru to form an all-India government. Astonished and feeling deceived by the "pro-Hindu" British government, millions of Muslims decked their houses with black flags, the sign of despair and anger, and prepared for the worst.

The worst soon came.

While not yet official, India was already irredeemably partitioned. As the American historian of India Stanley Wolpert has written,

> There was no reconciliation, no solution to the problems of fundamental mistrust, suspicion, fear, and hatred. Too much blood had been let, too many knives buried in too many backs, too many unborn babies had been butchered in their mother's wombs, too many women raped, too many men robbed, people were fired to irrational hatred by the sick reflections of their communal neighbors in the house or village next door.[25]

In the Great Killing, the British found that most of the casualties were Muslims, killed by Hindu mobs, but there were hundreds of thousands killed in both communities.[26] That set off a flood of migrants. Misery awaited them. In the partition of India, nearly a million people were killed or died and over nine million Muslims crossed from India into lands that became Pakistan while roughly the same number of Hindus and Sikhs crossed into India or into that part of the Punjab that was joined to India. Indian Muslims voted for the creation of Pakistan with their feet.

Pakistan is both an emigrant society and a native society. To begin to understand its approach to national identity and the politics of nationalism, one must consider both aspects of its development. First, however much Pakistan thought of itself as a new nation-state, it inherited from British India not only prefabricated organizations—armies, ministries, law courts, civil services, postal systems, and so on—but also the codes of management required to run them. Thus, Pakistan was born in full flight. It could not escape its British past in almost any respect. And, at least in the persona of Jinnah while he lived, it was in part even "English." In his first pronouncement as governor-general, Jinnah, who had spent his life arguing for an Islamic homeland, made an astonishing proclamation to the constituent assembly, a statement that only an English-trained lawyer, not a refugee from intercommunal killings, could have made: "You are free to go to your [Hindu] temples. You are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan . . . you may belong to any religion or caste or creed. That [your creed or community] has nothing to do with the business of the State."[27]

Brave and humane words, but the reality was far different. Fear, anger, and what I have called the post-imperial malaise were built into Pakistan. They still dominate it and have led, among other things, to the enormous influence of the military establishment on domestic affairs, the decision to acquire nuclear weapons, and the determination to maintain huge conventional armies. Even more than India, Pakistan began as a military state. In partition, it got about a third of the old army "but only a sixth of its sources of revenue. From

birth, therefore, Pakistan was saddled with a huge army it could not pay for."[28] Leader after Pakistani national leader always found a reason to go for military power. Each one believed, understandably, that the policy of India's leaders was shaped by their often-repeated aim to reincorporate Pakistan into India as the Nehru government was then doing with other breakaway or potentially breakaway provinces, including Hyderabad, Goa, and Kashmir. Reading the pronouncements of the Hindu Indian leaders and watching their acts, not only officers but also civilian leaders, journalists, civil servants, and the citizenry at large then concluded (and mostly still believe) that there really is a wolf at Pakistan's door.

War became a way of life. The two countries fought one another formally in 1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999, and engaged in significant skirmishes in 1984, 1985, 1987, and 1995. In each of these clashes, Pakistan's defeats were inevitable. In addition to other advantages, India fields an army about twice the size of Pakistan's.[29] Even in intervals of "peace," which amounted to armed truce, war was thought to be about to happen. And some degree of defeat was thought to be inevitable. Thus, fear of India was palpable. Present from the beginning of Pakistan, that fear remains today a dominant aspect of Pakistani politics. One after another, Pakistani leaders have viewed India as an existential threat, and this security mind-set has deformed Pakistan. The military overwhelms civilian institutions and practices. It has been impossible for the few civilian leaders who wished to bring about a balance between civil and military power even to trim the role of the military. The military was always ready to replace civilian government. Generals Iskander Mirza, Ayub Khan, Zia ul-Haq, and Perviz Musharaf each staged military coups d'état and collectively put the country under military rule for nearly half of the years since independence. Few believe the military will stay in their barracks.

One leader who tried to create a new balance—and paid for his efforts with his life—was Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, a successor to Jinnah as prime minister from 1973.

Perhaps not surprisingly, Bhutto and Nehru shared formative experiences. Both grew up in luxury and security. When Bhutto was born, his father was serving as prime minister of one of the smaller Indian states and was regarded by the British as a loyal supporter of the empire. Like Nehru, Bhutto did most of his studies abroad. He went first to the University of California and then to Oxford.[30] After Oxford, he also shared some of Jinnah's experiences. Like Jinnah, he read law at Lincoln's Inn in London. And, like Jinnah, he was completely at home in England. But the India in which all three men had to shape their lives had become very different from the India they

had known in their earlier years. To control it and to improve it, they each set out on parallel but often conflicting programs.

As I interpret Bhutto's program, he based it on his belief that Pakistan could become a viable state only if two things happened. First, the looming threat of India had to be removed. Given the disparity of population and wealth, there was no way, Bhutto thought, that Pakistan could match India with conventional means. He decided that the only way to meet India's threat was with the acquisition of nuclear weapons. In 1965, he famously said that "if India builds the bomb, we will eat grass, even go hungry, but we will get one of our own. We have no other choice."[31] India exploded its first nuclear weapon in 1974 near the Pakistani frontier. It took Pakistan twenty-four years to catch up. Now both India and Pakistan have large inventories of these terrible weapons. Neither side can use them without committing suicide, and having them has not stopped conventional wars.[32] Nor do they appear to have diminished what the Pakistani military sees as the Indian mortal threat. Thus, they did not lessen the military establishment's dominance. In short, that part of Bhutto's program failed to accomplish its purpose.

The second part of his program, despite herculean efforts, also failed to accomplish what he wanted. Put simply, he sought to create a progressive society through education. In an address to the nation, he took pride in having created "6,500 new primary schools, 900 middle schools, 407 high schools, 51 Intermediate Colleges, 21 Degree Colleges . . . [and] four new Universities. . . . The People's Open University is another innovative venture which has started functioning from Islamabad."[33] These ventures alone would have sufficed to secure him a major place in Pakistani history.

He also recognized that improvement in education alone, while fundamental, would not work unless the Pakistanis could rise above absolute poverty. So he undertook several ventures that resulted in a dramatic rise of the standard of living. For an agricultural society, access to land was critical. But, as I have pointed out, the heritage of the British era was the conversion of productive peasant owners into serfs. So he passed a law to break up large holdings, putting a 150-acre limit on irrigated land one farmer could own. Realizing that the new owners would quickly fall into the hands of usurers, he forced the banks to make available credit on sustainable terms to small holders. Investment in the economy more than doubled.

These actions and others aimed to enhance industrial workers' rights resulted, over the years after his tenure in office, in a decrease in the number of Pakistanis living in "absolute" poverty, from nearly one Pakistani in two (about 46 percent) to less than one in three (30 percent). The poverty line has hovered near there ever since.[34] His

policies over the years can be credited with raising about twenty-five million people out of poverty.[35]

Following Bhutto's overthrow in a military coup d'état and execution, Pakistan has descended into a pit of corruption in which its still-embryonic institutions of nationhood have been stunted, deformed, or suppressed. Nationalism has not succeeded in creating a viable order.

One of the major reasons for Pakistan's failure to rise to the expectations of its founders concerns another part of its struggle with India. That is the issue of Kashmir. Indeed, this struggle long predates the existence of India and Pakistan. Like so many of the world's tragedies, the plight of Kashmir is deeply embedded in history. To amend the adage attributed to the philosopher George Santayana, I suggest that those who cannot remember the past will be unable to comprehend the present. So now I will discuss how Kashmir fits into history.

CHAPTER 24

Kashmir, the Palestine of Central Asia

Kashmir can be thought of as the Palestine of Central Asia. Like Palestine, it was and continues to be the scene of a deadly struggle between resident societies and the focal point of regional conflict. Also like Palestine, Kashmir has been the meeting ground for some of the world's most powerful religious forces—in Palestine, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, and in Kashmir, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. To understand Islam in Kashmir, one must review both its religious and its political backgrounds.

Before the fourteenth century Kashmir was populated by both Hindus, who had moved up from the subcontinent, and Buddhists, who had moved westward from neighboring Tibet. Then, in 1320, the area was invaded by one of the Mongol armies Genghis Khan had hurled across Asia. The upper class, which had the means to flee, fled, while many of those who were left behind were slaughtered. The old Kashmir, like societies in many of the lands conquered by the Mongols, collapsed. After a century of misery, hunger, and disease—a true dark age—the grandchildren and great-grandchildren of the older Kashmiris gradually emerged from their hiding places and began to put their lives together again. Theirs was a very different Kashmir from the one their ancestors had known. As one scholar of Kashmir history put it, the old order of Hinduism, which depended on the caste system, "lay in ruins, for its basic law—the law of marriage—had been violated by men and women who had mated during the Mongol cataclysm and gave rise to a homogeneous, casteless society. The future history of Kashmir will be unintelligible to anyone who fails to comprehend this basic fact."[1]

In the years that followed the exodus of the Mongols, a new ruler, a Hindu, came to the fore, but soon he was converted to Islam by a Sufi mystic. As in other areas devastated by the Mongols, Sufi Islam seemed an answer to contemporary misery. As I have recounted, it spread widely in the Middle East and Central Asia. Its message seemed

self-evident: the world is ultimately a place of desolation where those who search for a richer life will find only despair. The recent experience of the Kashmiris certainly justified that belief. The solution to wretchedness, the Kashmiri Sufis believed, was rejection of materialism. In following generations, most of the surviving Kashmiris converted to Islam through Sufism, which was known in Kashmir as Rishism.[2]

Under the influence of Rishism, some Hindu practices faded away—idols were melted down, widows were no longer burned alive beside their dead husbands, and the symbol of Hinduism, the *qashqa,* was no longer drawn on the forehead—but the Islam that evolved in Kashmir was deeply influenced by Hinduism. Under the rule of a tolerant Muslim prince and following the message of Sufism, Kashmir again became a cultured, open society, which the Kashmiris proudly called "the way of Kashmir," *Kashmiriyat*.

As the nineteenth century opened, Kashmir was split among some twenty-two small principalities that owed allegiance, as they had for centuries, to the Mughals of India or the Pashtuns of Afghanistan. Then, in 1819–1820, they were conquered by the great Sikh ruler of the Punjab, Ranjit Singh, and incorporated in his empire. Sikhism added another element to the Kashmiri experience.

Sikhism began in the sixteenth century as a reform movement. The founder, Guru Nanak, sought to mingle Muslim and Hindu beliefs, rituals, and populations. He rejected Hindu polytheism and affirmed the Islamic insistence on monotheism; he proclaimed mankind's brotherhood; and he made a personal example against the caste system by sharing living quarters and meals with Hindus, Muslims, and untouchables. Emphasis on ecumenicalism made Sikhism popular over a wide area of India and fit the Kashmiriyat philosophy of life. But gradually, over the three centuries following the death of Guru Nanak, Sikhism turned away from his welcoming of Islamic beliefs and practices and reverted to the Hinduism from which it had evolved. As a minority of the population of the Punjab, the Sikhs apparently needed a more strident, assertive set of beliefs than those set out by Guru Nanak. For this the Kashmiris were to pay a heavy price.

As they advanced across India, the British ran into Ranjit Singh's powerful Sikh empire. On the frontier of Punjab, they paused and decided to leave it and Kashmir's principalities to the Sikhs. The Sikhs were redoubtable warriors. And, having becoming more militant, the Sikhs attacked their own Muslims and the Kashmiri moderates. Among other measures, they laid ruinous taxes on them, causing a famine in 1832; they banned the distinctive Muslim call to prayer and closed down the major mosques; and they again promoted veneration of the

totem animal of the Hindus, the cow, making the slaughter of cattle a capital crime.

After the death of Ranjit Singh, British India returned to the offensive. The East India Company's army invaded, fought, and destroyed the Sikh empire and began to incorporate the Punjab into its "India." Because the British were then employing mainly Muslims as their sepoy soldiers, the Sikhs and other Hindus became increasingly anti-Muslim. And, as they did elsewhere on the subcontinent, they used the Hindus and Muslims against one another. While they conquered the Sikh Punjab mainly with Muslim soldiers, they formed alliances with the Hindu remnants of the Sikh empire. One of the former rulers, a petty prince by the name of Gulab Singh, was so rich that he was able to lend the British East India Company, then the effective ruler of India, money when it had a sudden shortfall. To pay him back, the company made him the owner of Kashmir. It was a bargain. Discounting the value of the land, based on tax revenue, he paid only about three English shillings in the currency of the time for each person.[3] In the Victorian English of the era, the 1846 Treaty of Amritsar specified that "the British Government transfers and makes over, for ever, in independent possession, to Maharaja Gulab Singh and the heirs male of his body" Kashmir.[4] Thus, the problem of Kashmir may be dated to 1846, when the Hindu/Sikh Gulab Singh bought the Muslim population and their land.[5]

Gulab Singh did not know the Kashmiris, and in order to exploit the population, he turned to the educated Kashmiri Hindu Pandits (one of whose progeny, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, later became prime minister of India).[6] Like Egypt's Copts, Kashmir's Pandits often served rulers as tax collectors. In Kashmir they squeezed those below them and were themselves squeezed by the rulers. Caught in the middle, they paid as little as possible to the rulers, while "they extorted as much as possible from the poor cultivators."[7] They monopolized the sale of everything from opium to raisins and the provision of services ranging from prostitution to grave digging. Naturally, the Muslim majority hated them and Gulab Singh. Gulab Singh's last act of state was to support the British in their suppression of the 1857 Sepoy Rebellion, and by doing so, he further enraged the Muslim community of Kashmir. But the political awakening of Kashmir was slow in coming.

It was not until the years following the First World War that the members of Kashmiri Muslim society began to awaken politically. Newly aware that they were being exploited, workers in the silk industry organized a strike—the first that Kashmir had ever experienced. When it was brutally repressed, the strikers petitioned the British viceroy of India for redress of their grievances. Instead of considering their demands, the viceroy turned their petition over to

the then-ruling Hindu maharaja, who decided to hang the protesters. Generously, the viceroy ruled hanging to be excessive, so the maharaja just had them tortured.

Jailing and torture of the workers was at least temporarily effective. The strikers gave up, their grievances unmet. But a decade later the Kashmir police compounded what was originally an economic grievance by attacking a mosque they thought was the dissidents' headquarters. Police violence thus made what had been the cause of a small section of the population into what, in the measure of the times, was a national issue. From that police raid can be dated the awakening of the belief that Islam itself was in danger from the Hindu government. Violent protests erupted throughout Kashmir and were met by police gunfire. These clashes constituted what has been described as the founding moment of Kashmiri nationalism. In short, the Kashmiris began to experience in the 1930s the same sentiments of religious nationalism—Muslim versus Hindu—that were already provoking strife in India.

In Kashmir, religious tensions festered in the appalling social, cultural, and economic conditions in which the Muslims lived. Even the resident British adviser was shocked by the conditions of the Muslim population. He found the Muslims to be "absolutely illiterate, working in poverty and . . . governed like dumb driven cattle."[8]

Being "governed like dumb driven cattle" had a major impact on intellectual life. As Sumantra Bose remarks, until 1924 no newspapers were published in Kashmir and "apart from the mass illiteracy due to a paucity of even primary education for Muslims, the maharaja's government regarded any semblance of a free press and public opinion as subversive and regularly tried to prevent newspapers and journals published in Lahore by émigré Kashmiris from reaching the kingdom."[9]

A contemporary of Nehru and a fellow Pandit, the Kashmiri journalist Prem Nath Bazaz, focused much of his commentary on the appalling poverty of the Muslim population: "Dressed in rags and barefoot, a Muslim peasant presents the appearance of a starving beggar. . . . Most are landless laborers, working as serfs for absentee landlords."[10] The Muslim peasants were borne down by the often-imaginary debt of long-dead ancestors. That debt was inherited generation after generation and compounded by usury. In poverty, weakness, and illiteracy, peasants were forced to work in virtual slavery.

Bazaz, who was a socialist, as well as a supporter of Kashmiri independence, was arrested by the newly formed Indian government in 1947 and held in prison for three years. He was arrested again in 1955 and charged with having produced writings that were

prejudicial to the security of India. When he was released, he broadened his critique to discuss the Indian occupation in a number of powerful works, including *Azad [Free] Kashmir: A Democratic Socialist Conception* and particularly *The Untold Story of Kashmir: Democracy through Intimidation and Terror.* He also founded a significant journal, the *Voice of Kashmir.*

In addition to Bazaz, two other Kashmiri men of Pandit origin would play major and conflicting roles in that tragic struggle: in Kashmir, the Muslim shaikh Muhammad Abdullah, whose family had converted to Islam in the nineteenth century, came to personify Kashmiri nationalism, while Nehru became one of the leaders of Indian nationalism.[11]

Except for their shared Kashmiri origin, the two men could hardly have been more different: Muhammad was a man of the people, having had to work at menial tasks to pay his way through local schools, with little exposure to the non-Indian world, and was formally educated as a chemist in the newly formed Indian Muslim University of Aligarh, while Nehru was a wealthy, urbane Brahmin, a product of the finest English education at Harrow and Cambridge. However, they shared two characteristics: they both would be frequent inmates in prison, and they both became revered as leaders of their peoples. What was truly remarkable was that, after they met in 1937, they also became friends. That friendship almost saved Kashmir.

Like many leaders of nationalist movements, as I witnessed in Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Algeria, Muhammad began what became his political career with a small discussion group. Gathering together only about a dozen like-minded young men, he helped to focus their hopes and angers on the issues that were then also energizing the educated youths of India. From this modest beginning, he created what was first called the “All-Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference” in 1932.[12] Two years later, it was renamed the “All-Jammu and Kashmir National Conference.” As we have seen, during the Iranian Revolution the use of the word “national” in place of the word “Muslim” or “Islam” was significant. In Iran the change had outraged the religious establishment; in Kashmir it enabled at least a few Hindus to join the movement. They also wanted Kashmir to become *azad* (free). In Kashmir as throughout much of Africa and Asia, the shift from religion to nationalism was the great intellectual issue of the twentieth century.

The 1932 Kashmiri conference had barely taken hold as a political movement—although Shaikh Muhammad had already served six months in prison and had been released to great popular acclaim in Srinagar—when the Second World War virtually froze Indian politics.

A degree of political freedom was allowed only when the pressing danger of an invasion of India by Japanese-supported Indian forces ended. Then, the National Conference immediately became Kashmir's largest political party. In 1944, chafing under British rule and the tyranny of the maharaja, the National Conference took a symbolic step toward independence by proclaiming a flowery version of the American declaration of independence: "We the people . . . in order to perfect our union . . . to raise ourselves and our children for ever from the abyss of oppression and poverty, degradation and superstition, from medieval darkness and ignorance . . . do propose and propound the following constitution."[13] Eloquent words, but they did not assuage the festering sores of extreme poverty and communal exploitation. The partition of India would soon rub salt into the wound.

In 1947, when the British prepared to leave South Asia, the fate of Kashmir was undetermined. As the titular ruler of a princely state, its maharaja had been given authority by the British rulers to decide whether to join India or Pakistan. The British excused their lamentable role in the events at the end of their rule by alleging that they "assumed" that the maharaja would be guided by two considerations: the wishes of the Kashmiris and geography. Neither shaped his choice. Probably most Kashmiris favored joining Pakistan or at least opposed joining India. Moreover, Kashmir fit what would become Pakistan better than it did India, since they had a common frontier, they shared a common river system—the Indus and its tributaries were the lifeblood of Pakistan—and much of Kashmir's commerce was sent to or through Karachi.

Being caught between India and Pakistan, the maharaja realized, was dangerous, but allying with either was unattractive. To join a self-proclaimed Muslim state, Pakistan, would have made no sense for the Hindu maharaja. Joining India was also unattractive because at that time its self-proclaimed socialist leaders were opposed to the continuation of princely ownership of property. So Maharaja Hari Singh equivocated. Theoretically, there was a third choice: independence. But the choice was only theoretical. Neither India nor Pakistan was willing to consider independence. They still are not.

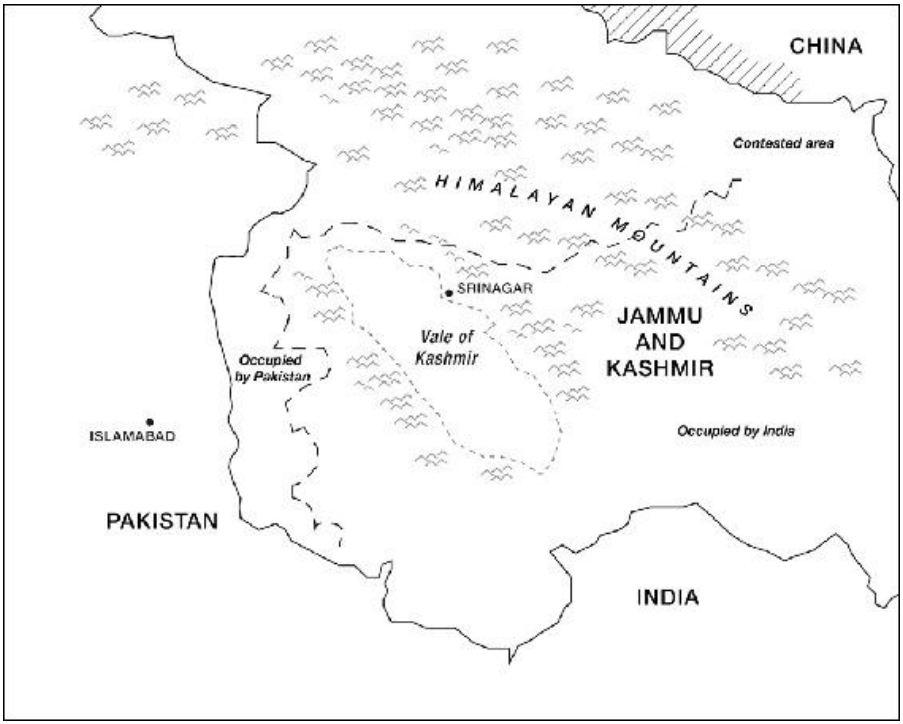
Pakistan acted first. Not trusting the maharaja to make the politically and geographically sensible choice and not approving of the idea of an independent Kashmir, Muhammad Ali Jinnah decided to send that part of the army that Pakistan had inherited from the British raj into Kashmir. But the British would not allow it. They warned him that if he tried to use his regular troops, they would withdraw all their British officers; that would cause the Pakistani army to collapse.[14] So, lacking any better military option and determined not to lose Kashmir,

Jinnah sent an irregular force of Pashtun tribesmen with a small contingent of Pakistani officers and soldiers to secure the state. The Pashtuns, in their accustomed mode of warfare, as the Pakistani historian Tariq Ali wrote, "embarked on a three-day binge, looting houses, assaulting Muslims and Hindus alike, raping men and women and stealing money from the Kashmir treasury."[15] Worse, they even failed to reach their objective.

Jinnah had created a no-win fiasco and terrified the maharaja, who concluded that further equivocation might result in his murder. So the maharaja appealed to the new Indian government to come to his rescue. Nehru seized the chance: he replied that India would save the maharaja, but only if he chose union with India. Fearing for his life, the maharaja immediately agreed.

At this point, far too late and without means of enforcement, the last British viceroy and first governor-general, Lord Louis Mountbatten, weighed in on the dispute: the Indians, he proclaimed, must consult "the will of the people, being ascertained by a plebiscite after the [Pashtun] raiders had been driven out of the state."[16] Convening his whole cabinet to be sure of unity on this critical issue, Nehru promised to hold that plebiscite and, at the request of the maharaja, sent troops to drive out the Pashtuns.[17] The still-operative British administration, which had stopped the Pakistanis, did not stop the Indians. British-authorized Indian troops quickly secured most of Kashmir, including the best part, the Vale of Kashmir.

That move started the battle for Kashmir, which has continued ever since. The Pashtuns named themselves the Army of Azad Kashmir and managed to seize and hold on to about a quarter of the maharaja's domain (some 33,000 square miles) while Indian forces moved in and occupied the lion's share, 85,806 square miles, including the major city, Srinagar. The population was roughly in proportion to the surface area: roughly two-thirds in the Indian-controlled area and one-third in the Pakistani-controlled area. China would later acquire a part of each of these two zones—from Pakistan by negotiation and from India by force.



India and Pakistan have struggled for nearly seventy years for control of the rugged southern and western regions of Kashmir. A truce was negotiated in 1949, but it has been repeatedly broken and renegotiated, most recently in 2015. The mainly Muslim Kashmiris have fought a desperate guerrilla and terrorist campaign, partly encouraged by Pakistan, to drive out the Indian occupying army.

Both India and Pakistan complained to the UN Security Council about these events. In response, first in January and then in April 1948, the council called for the withdrawal of the irregular forces sent into Kashmir by Pakistan to be matched by the withdrawal of Indian forces "progressively to the minimum strength required for the support of the civil power in the maintenance of law and order [and they] . . . should not afford any intimidation or appearance of intimidation to the inhabitants." The council then agreed to appoint a plebiscite administrator "for holding a fair and impartial plebiscite including, for that purpose only, the direction and supervision of the State forces and police."[18]

It was not to be: on October 22, 1948, the first Indian-Pakistani war over Kashmir erupted. At the request of India, the United Nations worked out a truce that translated into de facto partition; it came into effect on January 1, 1949. Partition, however, did not solve the conflict. Kashmir entered a sort of limbo: unwilling to acquiesce but unable to persevere, the Kashmiris, often with Pakistani encouragement and sometimes with Pakistani help, continued to

demonstrate against the Indian occupation.

We have already met the Kashmiri who sought a path through the labyrinth. Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah emerged from his second incarceration in the maharaja's prison just days before the maharaja wrote to Mountbatten "that it is my intention at once to set up an interim Government [pending accession to India] and asked Shaikh [Muhammad] Abdullah to carry the responsibilities in this emergency." Little noticed by most at the time was that each party to "this emergency" had staked out a position that would set the future course: the maharaja was bowing out; the British had decided that Kashmir should go to India; Nehru was determined that it should do so; Pakistan's Jinnah felt cheated by the British and outsmarted by the Hindus; and Shaikh Muhammad had made up his mind that the only sensible solution was not to seek independence, which he had long sought, but rather to join India. For the rest of his career, he was to be the reluctant standard-bearer for Nehru's policy.

Initially, Shaikh Muhammad rode the wave of his popularity, and his decision not to press for independence was apparently not widely known or understood. He used his prestige to try to build a bridge between India and Pakistan. But, since he had decided that independence was not a viable option and knew that Nehru would not accept anything less than Indian sovereignty, he had nothing to offer Pakistan. Despite that reality, he thought he saw a dim light at the end of this tunnel, so, as prime minister from March 17, 1948, he moved to raise a sort of national guard to defend Kashmir in what he apparently thought would be the proximate withdrawal of Indian armed forces and the achievement of some degree of regional autonomy.

That did not happen. But what did happen was perhaps much more significant. Shaikh Muhammad used his authority to institute a number of domestic social and economic reforms that he had advocated from his first days in the National Conference, fifteen years before. Just as Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto would later do in Pakistan, he began a program to divide the great (mainly Hindu) estates among the (mainly Muslim) peasant farmers, opened new schools and hospitals, and even created a university. In sum, he created a new class of Kashmiris, richer, better educated, and more capable than their fathers. In doing so, however, he also encouraged aspirations that would not be met by the Indian policy toward Kashmir.

Bowing to the inevitability of Indian power as far as Shaikh Muhammad judged the Kashmiris would tolerate, the National Conference proposed actions to implement what the Indian Constitution termed Kashmir's "special status": Shaikh Muhammad offered to turn control of foreign and military affairs over to India,

provided Kashmir could keep control of its domestic programs. He would go no further to meet the demands of the right-wing Indian Hindu party (the precursor of today's Bharatiya Janata Party, the BJP).[19] For seeking what Nehru judged a dangerous degree of autonomy, Nehru forced Shaikh Muhammad's resignation. He was again arrested, charged with conspiracy against the state, and hurried off to prison, where he languished for the next eleven years.

Even while isolated by years in prison, Shaikh Muhammad was the only identified national leader. When he was let out of prison in 1964, a million people, practically the entire adult population of Srinagar, turned out to welcome him home. He then made one last major effort to win Prime Minister Nehru over to a compromise with which India, Pakistan, and the Kashmiris could have lived. He thought he had conceived a workable formula and went to Pakistan to discuss it with the then Pakistani president, Ayub Khan. Ayub agreed to join him to discuss it with Nehru in Delhi. He was on the way when news came that Nehru had suddenly died. Shaikh Muhammad felt that his best hope to bring peace had gone with Nehru. He is said to have wept.

He was not trusted even in weeping. In 1965, he was interned for three years and then exiled from 1971 to 1973, and his party, now called the Plebiscite Front, was banned. Apparently dispirited and perhaps desperate, he met with Nehru's daughter and successor, Indira Gandhi, and reached a deal in 1974 with great personal and political consequences: he would give up, on behalf of Kashmir, the demand for a plebiscite. In return, Gandhi agreed that Kashmir would be given a degree of self-rule (as allowed in the Indian Constitution). On this basis, he returned to the office of chief minister of the state. With one short break, he was to remain in office until his death in 1982.

Between 1974 and 1982, as the Indian observer Pankaj Mishra has written, Shaikh Muhammad became "what other men before him had been: a satrap of the Indian state in Kashmir."[20] Although he could claim to be the father of his country and the benefactor of his people, and indeed virtually created its nationhood, Shaikh Muhammad made a Faustian deal: he agreed that Kashmir must give up all hope of independence, stay apart from Pakistan, and submerge itself into the Indian mass. In his long years in prison, exile, and the compromised position of India-tolerated prime minister, he had lost touch with the nationalist movement. Thus, as Mishra observed, just eight years after a million Kashmiris had attended his funeral in 1982, even his grave required "round-the-clock protection from vandals."[21] In the maelstrom of the insurgency, there was no room for a compromiser, even the father of his country.

During the late 1980s and 1990s Kashmiris lived in a permanent depression and a political limbo. Shaikh Muhammad was followed by

his son Farouk; he proved to be too independent for Indian prime minister Gandhi, who installed a Hindu governor. That governor then purged Muslims from government and, in highhanded and violent ways, virtually singlehandedly created the insurgent movement. By 1990, small groups of Kashmiris, often equipped by Pakistan and trained in the tactics learned in fighting the Russians in Afghanistan, were slipping back into Kashmir to harass the Indian administration.

When the Hindu rightist party, the BJP, came to power in 1998, it announced its platform for India—which, after all, is a multicultural, ethnically and religiously diverse society—as just "one people, one culture, one language" and set out to stifle the aspirations of non-Hindus. Repression was the order of the day: the security forces in Kashmir were given nearly a free hand, but their brutal tactics alienated the majority from the Indian administration. Security vanished. Meanwhile, the economy first stalled and then deteriorated.

As the economy deteriorated, the majority of the Kashmiris were forced to live without electricity, safe drinking water, or sewage facilities. Unemployment, already high (as in the rest of India), soared partly because, in the growing insurgency, the state had become virtually the only significant employer. About one in four Kashmiris fell below the Indian poverty line. This contributed both to growing hostility to the Indian occupation and to an explosion of mental health problems. In the period from 2003 to 2006, forty-five thousand people entered Srinagar hospitals with psychiatric problems.[22]

Probably the most systematic, informed, and reputable study of Kashmir in the period around 2005 was made by the Dutch branch of Médecins sans Frontières. Its report, based largely on interviews, covers the period from 1989 to 2006. The findings can only be described as appalling. Here are the main points:

> Almost half (48.1%) of the respondents said they felt only occasionally or never safe. . . . People frequently reported crackdowns (99.2%), frisking by security forces (85.7%) and round-up raids in villages (82.7%). In the same period, damage to property (39%) or the burning of houses (26.3%) was considerable. Interviewees reported witnessing (73.3%) and directly experiencing themselves (44.1%), physical and psychological mistreatment, such as humiliation and threats. . . . One in six respondents (16.9%) were legally or illegally detained. A shocking finding is that torture appears to be widespread among those detained (legally or illegally): 76.7% said they were tortured while they were in captivity. . . . Nearly one in ten people (9.4%) lost one or more members of their nuclear family because of the violence. A third (35.7%) indicated that they had lost one or more extended family members.[23]

The report continues, "Sexual violence is a common strategy used to terrorise and intimidate people in conflict, but in Kashmir it is an issue that is not openly discussed. Nevertheless, 11.6% of interviewees said

they had been victims of sexual violence since 1989. Almost two-thirds of the people interviewed (63.9%) had heard over a similar period about cases of rape, while one in seven had witnessed rape."[24]

Much of the evidence was, literally, buried: although the relevant UN official, the special rapporteur on extrajudicial executions, was denied entry to Kashmir by the Indian government, an unofficial group known as the International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-Administered Kashmir claims to have documented in one small area "2,700 graves in 55 villages and three districts in Indian-administered Kashmir between 2005 and 2009. The numbers are staggering: 2,373 graves were found unmarked, 151 graves contained more than one body; while 23 graves held between three and 17 bodies."[25]

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) told Andrew Buncombe of the *Independent* that "it had complained so many times to the authorities that it had concluded that the Indian government condoned the actions."[26] The ICRC rarely discloses its findings to nongovernmental organizations or the media, but it briefed officials of the US embassy in New Delhi. Reports on its findings by the embassy to the State Department were passed to WikiLeaks. The embassy dispatches revealed that of the 1,491 prisoners the ICRC managed to interview,

> in 852 cases, the detainees reported ill-treatment, the ICRC said. A total of 171 described being beaten and 681 said they had been subjected to one or more of six forms of torture. These included 498 on which electricity [electric shocks] had been used, 381 who had been suspended from the ceiling, 294 who had muscles crushed in their legs by prison personnel sitting on a bar placed across their thighs, 181 whose legs had been stretched by being "split 180 degrees", 234 tortured with water and 302 "sexual" cases. . . . The ICRC said all branches of the Indian security forces used these forms of ill-treatment and torture, adding: "The abuse always takes place in the presence of officers and . . . detainees were rarely militants (they are routinely killed), but persons connected to or believed to have information about the insurgency."[27]

These activities, in spirit if not always in exact language, were authorized by the September 10, 1990, Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) aimed at those "adversely affecting the harmony amongst different sections of the people [or those engaged in] activities directed towards disclaiming, questioning or disrupting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India or bringing about cession of a part of the territory of India." The act authorized any Indian noncommissioned or commissioned officer to use such force as he deemed necessary and to "arrest, without warrant, any persons . . . against whom a reasonable suspicion exists that he has committed or is about to commit a cognizable offence and may use such force as

may be necessary to effect the arrest." In pursuit of these tasks, all personnel were granted immunity from prosecution.[28]

The act was published; the actions were not. But two days after the American embassy cables were published, the chief minister of Kashmir insisted "that the use of torture . . . is a thing of the past."[29] There is no authoritative information on this claim, but in 2012, the chief minister is reported to have said that the AFSPA must be continued in force, and, as recently as March 2013, Kashmir was put again under curfew.

Driven to despair and finding no open political recourse, Kashmiri Muslims often turned to insurgency. Insurgency and counterinsurgency have been the twin poles of Kashmir life during most of the last half century. Some Kashmiris turned to Pakistan for aid, and for its own reasons, the Pakistani government was willing to help. Sometimes, also for its own reasons, the Pakistani government sought to diminish the conflict. That ambivalence terrified the Kashmiri mujahidin. So, in the fight for survival, the leader of the United Jihad Council, Syed Salahuddin, warned that the council would attack Pakistan "if it abandons the Kashmir cause."[30] He argued that only through armed struggle can independence be achieved: "Those calling for settlement of the Kashmir issue through peaceful means were in fact deceiving the innocent Kashmiris. . . . Experience of the past 65 years should convince anyone that only a strong and target-oriented armed struggle across India-held Kashmir could win freedom from Indian occupation. . . . About 150 rounds of talks with India had failed to produce anything."[31]

Although India and Pakistan had occasionally talked, the only expression the Kashmiris have been able to achieve is through armed resistance. Kashmiri nationalism has proved ineffective in stopping the occupation of their country.

Far away from Kashmir, another struggle between Muslims and Indians and their British sometime allies was taking place in Malaysia. Malaysia had a more complex society than Kashmir but a more concentrated economy. The issues of nationalism that it faced were less bitter than those we have seen in Kashmir, but events and politics there introduced something that Kashmir had not experienced in modern times: the coming of other peoples into their society. Thus, in some ways, the experience of Malaysia more resembled that of Algeria, except that the newcomers were not Europeans but fellow Asians. To Malaysia I now turn.

CHAPTER 25

Islam in Southeast Asia

Malaysia is a small country fit into a large geographical puzzle. It is ringed by Thailand, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, the Philippines, Vietnam, and Cambodia around the South China Sea. The sea facilitated movement among them so that Malaysia shares many cultural traits with at least its southern neighbors. From very early times, the sea also made possible the visits of traders, the migrations of peoples, and the spread of language and religion.

For centuries, traders passed through the Strait of Malacca between Malaysia and Sumatra carrying goods between Arabia and Iran far in the west and Canton and Shanghai to the north. At some point, probably roughly the time that Saladin was driving the Crusaders out of Jerusalem, Muslim merchants introduced Islam. One imagines, for there are no records other than the occasional traveler's tale, Arab dhows tying up beside Chinese junks at Malacca. The Chinese would have brought cloves and nutmeg from the Spice Islands and porcelain from China to swap for cinnamon from Ceylon, pepper from India, and copper from Bahrain.

The strait was the critical junction—what strategists think of as the choke point—on a southern, maritime version of the Silk Road that ran across Central Asia. In the days of sailing ships, the passage through the strait was the only practical link between the Far East and Africa, the Middle East, and Europe. Malacca was its hub. Being able to stop there for fresh vegetables and fruit to prevent scurvy, to fill barrels or skins with drinking water, to repair sails, and to plug leaks was vital. In hostile hands, it could shut down a large segment of the world's trade. Both of these possibilities made it attractive to the Portuguese. They seized it in 1511.[1] For them, the trade in spices was golden, and Malacca was the base camp for expeditions to the Spice Islands. In 1641, as the Portuguese weakened, the Dutch took it from them. Then, in 1786, the British took it from the Dutch. Each of these imperial powers in its own turn had made Malacca into the money

machine it needed to build its empire.

The British did not move into the interior until the early nineteenth century. In 1924 they made a treaty with the Dutch to divide Southeast Asia between them. In that treaty, the British got recognition of their possession of Malacca, the island of Singapore, and a few of the native states. Then, tin, which had been produced in small quantities in Malaysia for thousands of years, became a globally significant commercial product. For decades it was worked manually by millions of Chinese laborers who were imported by Chinese entrepreneurs.[2] It was not until the 1870s that production became dominated by English merchant companies. These companies also used Chinese labor, but they found that the specialized machines they developed exploited the shallow mines more profitably. Production rapidly increased. Half a century later, Malaya was producing about a third of the world's tin and employing almost 120,000 mainly Chinese workers. Tin made Malaysia one of the most profitable of England's colonies.

Malaysia also offered another great natural resource, rubber. The Malayan rubber industry has been described as one of the greatest achievements of colonial enterprise. In 1839 Charles Goodyear had figured out how to turn rubber into a commercial product. The immediate result was that Brazil, where the rubber-bearing Para tree was indigenous, began to earn nearly half of its income from the sale of rubber. For years, Brazil had a virtual monopoly. To protect its trade, it banned the export of seed to grow the tree. Inevitably, someone would try to cash in. That is what happened in 1876. An Englishman by the name of Henry Wickham smuggled seed back to England's Kew Garden, where it was propagated and distributed to British possessions in the South. In 1896, the first commercial grove of Para trees was planted in Malaysia.

Rubber had to be harvested from the trees. The demand resulted in a virtual replay of the sugar industry. Whereas Europeans had developed a sweet tooth shortly before Christopher Columbus sailed to the New World, by 1900 the whole world wanted tires for its new addiction to the automobile. While the demand for sugar virtually caused slavery, the automobile brought about a new form of indentured laborers. The trade in Indian bodies had almost the scale and most of the horror of the trade in Africans. What the Portuguese did in Africa, the Dutch and British did in India. The numbers of Indian laborers virtually exploded as rubber became a major international commodity and as famine drove Indians to desperation.

Some foreign workers returned to their homelands, but many stayed. Over time, many produced families. Consequently, by the eve of the Second World War, the native members of the Indian and

Chinese communities made up approximately 40 percent of the population of Malaysia. The Chinese congregated in the cities and towns and controlled retail trade; the Indians worked the rubber plantations; and the Malays continued to earn their livings as peasant farmers and fishers. While this arrangement gives the impression of a neat division of functions, in fact there was sharp competition for jobs and recognition of status among them. This became manifest in part because of the Great Depression of the 1930s.

The Chinese began to agitate to be accepted as Malay citizens. It had become dangerous if not impossible for them to "return"—indeed, an increasing number had never lived in China. Separately but equally, from 1936 Indian immigrants also began to demand representation in government councils and the right to stay. Many of the Indians had no way to return. India in the 1930s was not a welcoming society, and many of the younger people had no connection to it. These aims of the foreign workers frightened the politically active Malays. They began to make known their opposition to any form of assimilation. Their opposition was partly caused by economic forces. Jobs were hard to find and competition drove down salaries. Chinese and Indians were replacing natives all through the economy. But, increasingly, the Malays began to be motivated by their belief that the immigrants threatened their sense of national identity.

That sense of identity began to be expressed as a reaction to the immigrants when, in 1938, a Malay by the name of Ibrahim Hajj Yaacob (as the Arabic name is spelled in Malay) formed the Malay Union of Youth. Yaacob and his followers were products of one of the first colleges in the country, the Sultan Idris Training College for Malay Teachers. The college was a gathering place for Malay Muslims, and its classes became a sort of "factory" of Malay nationalism. The young students emerged from the classroom to form the Partai Kebangssan Melayu Malaya (PKMM). Disturbed by the influx of foreign workers, they advocated the merger of Malaysia and Indonesia to dilute the influence of the Chinese and Indian communities and to end British imperialism. Although the Union of Youth and the PKMM were hardly larger than discussion groups, Yaacob may be regarded as the first of the Malay nationalists.

Like similar groups all over the Muslim world, the Union of Youth took to journalism to spread its cause. But unlike the other nationalist groups I have discussed, it acquired an already existing and widely read daily newspaper that dealt with current events, the Singapore publication known as the *Malay Times.* The *Times* became the group's voice until the British banned both the newspaper and the union. Then, just before the 1942 Japanese invasion, the British arrested Yaacob and most of his followers. Like most Malays, those members of

the PKMM who remained at large welcomed the Japanese, whom they hoped would be more sympathetic as fellow Asians than the British. As soon as they could make contact with them, they petitioned the Japanese to recognize Malay independence. To their surprise and disillusionment, the Japanese refused.

Worse, the Japanese began to dismantle and ship back to Japan such industry as Malaysia then had; subsequently, as their ships began to be sunk during the war and they could no longer export tin and rubber, they cut back on production. With declining production, large numbers of Malays and members of the minority communities were thrown out of work. As the regular importation of rice was cut off and the price of locally grown food grains rose, widespread famine followed. The Japanese were unable and perhaps even unwilling to assist the local people with food, money, or employment. They did, however, have a need for laborers for their campaign in Burma so they more or less kidnapped Malays to meet their need. The flow of enslaved or indentured laborers was reversed: whereas the British had brought workers eastward from India, the Japanese shipped Malays and Indians westward toward India.

Growing Malay discontent and disappointment with the Japanese offered an opening to the British. Hard-pressed as they were on the Indian-Burmese frontier by the Japanese army and its supporters from the Indian troops that had been surrendered by their British commanders in Singapore, the British sought a way to weaken or at least distract the Japanese. If they could stimulate Malays to fight for their nation, the British thought, they could tie down Japanese troops that otherwise would join in the attack on India. So, ironically, stimulating nationalism became the strategy of the great imperial power.

As in the Balkans, the British first tried to work with groups with whom they felt more comfortable. In Yugoslavia, they started out with a group of rightist military officers known as the Chetniks, but they shared more with the Italian Fascists and the German Nazis than with the British. To engage the German army, the British were forced to deal with Josip Broz Tito's Communists. That strategy worked in Yugoslavia and probably would have worked in Greece, but there the British stuck with the extreme Right. What emerged from both ventures was that it was the Left that did the fighting. The Right often collaborated with Britain's enemies or did nothing. So it was in Malaysia. Insofar as they could operate through agents smuggled into the country, the British favored a group known as the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army. Its choice of name reflected its hope more than a policy. The word "army" was hyperbole. It never became an effective force. It was poorly trained and composed of the wrong

people. Most of its members were city dwellers, while its actions usually required long residence in the jungles. There many of them deserted, sickened, or died. The casualty rate was said to be about one in three recruits. Finally, as morale collapsed and little support arrived from the hard-pressed British, it was penetrated and manipulated by the Japanese, as Draža Mihailović's Chetniks in Yugoslavia and Napoleon Zervas's National Republicans in Greece were penetrated by the Italians and Germans. The group could not be relied on.

In desperation, the British turned to the Communists and nationalists. But, however attractive in the general strategy of the war, stimulating the natives who had been struggling to get the British to leave was politically dangerous. And the more capable the group, the greater the danger. The most active were members or supporters of the still-tiny Malay Communist Party. To British officials who had made their careers in the colonies, were presumed experts on Malay affairs, and were at least sympathizers of the British Union of Fascists, dealing with the radical nationalists and Communists appeared madness. The only policy they favored was putting all the agitators, whether nationalists, Muslims, or Communists, in prison. That was the local view, and eventually it would carry the London government along, but in the pressure of wartime, when Britain was hovering on the brink of defeat, the larger strategy argued for encouraging everyone who could shoot a gun to aim it at the Japanese. Fortunately for the Communists, the issue was resolved, at least temporarily, in their favor when the Soviet Union declared war on Germany and guardedly joined the Allies. Communists suddenly became allies. Prime Minister Winston Churchill could then safely order his officials in Singapore to make a deal with the potential insurgents.

Churchill seized the chance in Malaysia, as he was then doing in Greece, Yugoslavia, Italy, France, Egypt, and Burma, to get everyone, regardless of his affiliation and aim, to start harassing the Axis. There were usually reasons for each venture, but espionage was almost a hobby with Churchill. He relished it and favored its use by the already established Secret Service (MI6) but, when it proved stodgy and slow, he tried his hand at creating a rival. He gave that organization, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), resources to mount covert operations or organize training missions all over the globe. Soon, America would create the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) on the pattern of the SOE.[3] Many of the activities were failures and few were well conceived, but inevitably the SOE and OSS armed and subsidized previously banned local groups.

Later, as the war drew to a close, Churchill's clever policy resulted in just what the officers of the Colonial Office had predicted: the recruits who played a minor role in the campaign against the Japanese

played a major role in the postwar anti-British campaign. These were villagers in volunteer units known as the Reserves, the Ho Pi Tui, who resembled the neighboring Vietnamese Viet Minh and the Philippine Hukbalahop. The Reserves realized that they had to play along with the British but never lost sight of the ultimate aim of getting rid of them.

With the end of the Japanese occupation, as in Italy and France, there was a period of lawless chaos. Armed with weapons given to them by the British or captured from the Japanese, the mainly Chinese insurgents demanded a new deal. The British tried to undercut them by building anti-Communist organizations. Their best hope was the non-Communist but leftist Malay Union of Youth, which had reformed itself into the Malay Nationalist Party, but it too was advocating British withdrawal, so the British quickly banned it. At the same time, they encouraged some pan-Islamists who had formed a discussion club to transform themselves into a Muslim political party. It kept quiet on the issue of British withdrawal, and, probably because of that, it failed to draw support from the Malay Muslim community.

Malay nationalism was slow in achieving coherence and means of expression. The Malay Peninsula was divided into nine Muslim sultanates, whose people varied in political maturity. Until after the Second World War, few Malays regarded the British as their main enemies; they focused their anger and fear on other Asian peoples, the Chinese and Indians who were competing for jobs. So, while in the abstract they wanted the British to leave, they were inhibited by their fear that if the British left, they would be swamped by the immigrants —fear of immigrants, as we have seen in recent years, is generally shared by even free societies—and the Malays had, as yet, no national institutions that could defend them. We might say that they had not achieved a national persona. Like a number of communities throughout the Muslim world, they were turning from religious organizations to nationalism, but they had not yet consolidated their ideas or their organization.

In the years to follow, a national persona would be created in the course of two violent episodes of guerrilla warfare. Yet, curiously, the Malays themselves played almost no role in the conflicts.[4] Their noninvolvement was crucial in deciding the outcome. Ultimately, the insurgency failed, despite its attempts to build native support, precisely because the native Malays did not identify with it. Even more important for the future, because they stood aside, they were not radicalized or disorganized by the conflict. Thus, they escaped the trauma and chaos that has affected other Muslim societies in their quests for national liberation. They did not have to fight for independence against the imperial power. For their own interests, in

fighting against the Chinese-based insurgency, the British declared Malaysia independent. As a consequence, the Malays were able to make a peaceful transition to a national political organization.

The United Malays National Organization (Pertubuhan Kebangsaan Melayu Bersatu) became and remains today Malaysia's largest political party. Careful and conservative, it was funded by the Malay merchant community and the sultans of the Malay states. Working with it, the British found that they could stay in Malaysia and protect their interests just by changing the color of the flag. Malaysia would become a federation of Malay sultans, and the British would be able to keep on harvesting rubber and mining tin.[5]

Events in neighboring Indonesia followed a very different course. It was there that the Islamic movement would find a way to embed itself most effectively in the anti-imperialist, multiethnic, and multireligious movement known, for the city where it was first promulgated, as the Bandung Conference. At the time of the conference, Indonesia was just emerging from centuries of rule by the Dutch and three years of occupation by the Japanese. These events, which I have touched on in Part 2 in describing how the Portuguese and the Dutch came to Aceh in northern Sumatra, were so formative for Indonesia and played such a part in its call for a new world that I will briefly summarize them.

Indonesia is remarkable among nations, first, for its size—it has the world's fourth-largest population, some 250 million people, who are scattered over about six thousand islands in a maritime area the size of Europe—and, second, for its cultural diversity. Its people speak one or other of some two hundred languages and follow all major religions and dozens of primitive religions. It contains the largest Muslim population of any nation and nine in ten of its inhabitants are Muslims.

The present capital of Indonesia, Jakarta, was founded in 1619 on the ruins of a native city by the Dutch East India Company. The company was the very embodiment of imperialism. It had all the attributes of a nation-state. It was authorized to start and conduct warfare, to carry on diplomacy independent of Holland, and even to found colonies abroad. As I have said, it was the archetype of what I have termed the North.

Indonesia did not exist as a political unit when the Dutch arrived. Rather, there were hundreds of "statelets" scattered over the islands. I have described in Part 2 how Aceh was in effect a separate country. Now I turn to what the Dutch were doing throughout the rest of the islands and particularly in Java.

At first the Dutch concerned themselves only with those islands that produced products of value—spices were the most profitable—for the company's traders. The merchants' influence on policy declined when the company was replaced in 1800, as in 1858 Britain would replace its East India Company, by a department that was a branch of the home government. But, whereas India became a quasi-autonomous part of the British Empire, the Dutch East Indies was ruled directly from Holland. As administrators of a colony, rather than as businessmen having to show a profit, the Dutch rulers found reasons to take over most of the six thousand inhabited islands.

Then disaster struck the Dutch at home. French armies drove Dutch king William V into exile. From his government-in-exile in England, William ordered his colonial officials to turn over their Indonesian possessions to the English to prevent the French from getting them. But most of the officials refused his order. None of the European powers acted decisively for a decade. Then, in 1808, Napoleon saw an opportunity to distract the English from attacking him in Europe by threatening them in the Far East. In that year, he sent one of his marshals, Herman Willem Daendels, to occupy the colony. Daendels far exceeded the requirements of that task. Being himself a child of the French Revolution, he tried to echo in Indonesia Napoleon's policy in Egypt. He proclaimed his intent to impose on the Javanese society what he believed or idealized as French social and political custom. To do that, he believed he had to "regime change" the country. His efforts resulted in exactly the opposite. Instead of destroying the "feudalism," as he saw it, of Javanese chiefs, he drove them into an opposition that was more effective, because more unified, than the opposition they had been able to mount against the Dutch.

Misguided though he was about Javanese society, Daendels was apparently a competent administrator and an able soldier. He had to be because Napoleon had given him almost nothing to work with. Bogged down in the guerrilla war in Spain and preparing for his invasion of Russia, Napoleon had no troops to spare for Indonesia. Even to protect his rudimentary administration, Daendels had to recruit and train a native army. He was better at recruiting than training. His force grew quickly to eighteen thousand, but, apparently, most of the men regarded their service as merely a source of income; when tested, they showed little inclination to fight or skill in the use of arms. His was an experience that would be shared by many later trainers of native armies, including the Americans in Afghanistan in our time. Imbuing native armies with patriotism for countries they do not recognize as nations is a task beyond the competence of foreigners, as Daendels soon learned. He must have been relieved when he turned over his command in May 1811.

The British struck quickly. The Royal Navy blockaded the main port city and capital, then known as Batavia (later Jakarta), and the French surrendered. The forces, both native and Dutch, that had opposed the French offered little resistance to the British. And the British, with their usual opportunism, decided to work for themselves. They were fortunate in finding and sending to take over Indonesia one of those remarkable Englishmen who built the British Empire, Thomas Stamford Raffles.

Raffles implemented most of the policies that Daendels had employed but did so more effectively and more brutally. In only five years he created a new colonial system. Then, in 1816, in the realignment of Anglo-Dutch relations that followed the defeat of Napoleon, the British returned the then-restructured colony to the Dutch. They gratefully accepted the British gift of rule but spurned the British gift of the method of governing. Almost immediately the reinstalled Dutch governors acted so repressively that they drove the people of Java to revolt. Whereas the British had been harsh but understandable, the Dutch were harsh but incomprehensible. Many of the Dutch actions were gratuitous, and Indonesians found them humiliating. The aura of superior power that had formed a protective halo over the British had been dissipated. Presumably the Indonesians, like their grandchildren after the Second World War, were impressed by the fact that the Dutch had been defeated.

How to take advantage of the Dutch vulnerability divided the local leaders. Initially, it does not appear that their aim was to regain their independence—a sense of nationalism had not yet been born—but there appears to have been a sense of foreboding over Dutch policy on Islam. Led by a vigorous Sufi movement, as in other areas of Africa and Asia, opposition to Dutch activities became popular. When, for the first time, there was a devastating outbreak of cholera, many Indonesians are said to have believed it was a sign of divine displeasure. In this explosive atmosphere, the Dutch governor-general picked up the most revolutionary of the policies of Daendels and Raffles and tried his hand at regime change. In quest for honesty in government, he abolished the corrupt system of land holdings that subsidized the native aristocracy; at a single blow he had threatened the chief citizens with devastation. Worse, he demanded repayment of subsidies they had been given by the French and British. All that was needed was a trigger to explode their anger. The trigger was pulled in 1825.[6]

To build a road the Dutch authorities callously began to destroy a Muslim saint's tomb. The tomb was the site of pilgrimages and was widely regarded as holy by Indonesian Sufis. In his attempt to protect it, the local Muslim ruler, Pangeran Diponegoro, gathered his

followers. They were joined by enough others to form a mob. Fighting broke out, and a general rebellion quickly spread from village to village and from island to island. In the savage fighting that followed in the next four years, the Dutch killed an estimated two hundred thousand Javanese, or about one in fifteen inhabitants.

The war is remembered today as a founding event of Indonesian national development. The destruction of the tomb, the event that started the war, is less remembered than the war, but it illustrates the basic element of imperialism: the North's dehumanization of the South. The Dutch did not even consider the attitudes or beliefs of the people they had conquered. They were not fellow human beings but "assets" when they produced useful goods and "obstacles" when they stood in the way of projects the ruling power wished to carry out. Dehumanization was a necessary precondition for imperialism and colonialism. As we have seen all over the Muslim world, imperial powers did much the same as the Dutch and were motivated by similar attitudes.

In the aftermath of their ferocious suppression of the Java rebellion, the Dutch fastened on the population a system of virtual serfdom, known in Java as *cultuurstelsel.* It was similar to the system the British imposed on Iraq that I have described in Chapter 19. Peasants were forced to grow crops that the government could sell abroad (particularly coffee), they were paid fixed prices and were held to fixed quotas, and they were not allowed to leave the land. For the Indonesian cultivators, the system was not only exploitive; it was lethal. Since they could not eat what they were forced to grow, they were all kept, like the Egyptian and Indian peasants, at bare subsistence, and large numbers died in famines.

For the Dutch, whose economy had been damaged by the Napoleonic occupation, the opportunity to exploit Indonesia was a godsend. It is said to have furnished more than a fifth of the revenue of the Dutch government for the next thirty years. Perhaps the Dutch could have continued this policy even longer with little effective opposition had they kept the population in complete ignorance. That is what they did to the peasantry. But they fell into the fiscal trap that ultimately destroyed most colonial regimes. They wanted to save money on administrating their colony. Bringing out Dutch clerks was expensive. They had to be paid on European standards or even more. Obviously it was cheaper to use Indonesians than to employ Dutchmen. So, as the British did in India, Iraq, and Egypt, they opened a few schools to train a limited number of natives in rudimentary skills and the language that clerks would need. Natives, particularly in Java, rushed to take advantage of the opportunity.

What was particularly remarkable about the Indonesian education

program was that one of its early advocates and publicists was a Muslim woman, Raden (Lady) Kartini, who, in her short life, from 1879 to 1904, also became a pioneer of women's liberation.[7] What Kartini advocated fit with Dutch plans to create a native bureaucracy —they were not so interested in the condition of women—and the Dutch found her at least inoffensive both because she was a woman and because she was a member of the elite group the Dutch thought they had won over.

What Kartini advocated was modest. It was little more than literacy. Broader education had no part in the Dutch program and they vigorously opposed it. But it proved impossible in Java, as in India, Iraq, and Egypt, to segregate education. Once begun, it moved beyond mere training and led to thinking about national issues. Inevitably a few students got through the barriers the Dutch imposed. The most remarkable was a young man known as Sukarno.[8]

Sukarno was fortunate to have had a father who was both an aristocrat (and therefore more or less acceptable to the Dutch regime) and a teacher (which enabled him to supplement what the schools were allowed to teach his son). Perhaps because he had been restricted to teaching in a native school, Sukarno's father pushed the boy to study in a Dutch school. In a possible reaction to that environment—where he was an alien, a mere native among the ruling elite—Sukarno reached out to find different leaders. The man he met was one of the first who would inspire Indonesian nationalism. Sukarno became his devoted disciple. He embodied everything the students at the Dutch school were not.

Oemar Said, who was better known in Java as Tjokroaminoto, had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, was deeply religious, and apparently had come from a large and relatively poor family. So, while he was getting an education, he supported himself by working in a sugar refinery. His job got him involved in labor relations, which he cast in an Islamic matrix. From this beginning came the Islamic Union (Serakat Islam) that grew to a membership of over two million.

Sukarno got from Oemar Said much of his inspiration, became virtually a member of his family, and married Oemar Said's daughter. But their lives began to pull apart. I think this was partly because the Dutch school gave Sukarno what Oemar Said did not have: access to a profession. Sukarno's was architecture. And, intellectually, by attending a university, Sukarno moved beyond the elementary level of education that Oemar Said had received. Sukarno was rising in the colonial world; Oemar Said was not. Sukarno divorced Oemar Said's daughter and pushed away from the Islamic Union to found in 1927 a party that espoused similar aims but was secular rather than Islamic, the Partai Nasional Indonesia. Attracting the growing number of

professionals and university graduates who shared Sukarno's experience, it became the largest and most active Indonesian party. That alarmed the Dutch. Instead of taking Sukarno as an example of a colonial they had fostered and with whom they could work, they designated him an enemy, arrested him, and put him on trial. That was a major blunder.

The Dutch blunder was a great opportunity for Sukarno. The trial gave him a platform, a means of reaching the public, and a popularity that he had not previously achieved. He used the opportunity to sharpen his message in a number of speeches that were avidly read and discussed throughout the country. In fact, it was at about this time that the concept of a single Indonesia became popular. Sukarno became the man of the moment.

But the moment ended. He was put in prison briefly, his party splintered, and when he was let free he dropped politics to return to architecture and contracting. Not convinced that he had really given up politics, the Dutch authorities sent him into domestic exile. That is where the Japanese found him when they invaded Indonesia in February 1942. The Dutch apparently saw the danger and tried to hustle him out of the country ahead of the advancing Japanese. They were not quick enough. And Sukarno almost literally threw himself into the arms of the Japanese. For him, and many of his followers, the Japanese invasion was a liberation. The Japanese were not interested in liberation but found him useful in effecting their own objectives. Those objectives included exploiting the economy, confiscating badly needed food for their army and population, and recruiting laborers. He must have found his new position worse than his position under the Dutch. But, if so, he managed to disguise his feelings until the end of the war. At that point, just as Japan was surrendering, Sukarno was forced by some of his own adherents to declare independence as the Republic of Indonesia.[9]

Then came the test of his brave declaration. As the Allies pushed up from Australia on their way to Tokyo, they arrived in Indonesia. The Japanese troops were defeated but still numerous, well armed, and organized. There were no Dutch. The English had been assigned the task of "handling" Indonesia. To the British, the issue they faced appeared straightforward: Holland was an ally; Indonesian nationalists were collaborators with the defeated and hated Japanese; and Indonesia belonged to Holland, just as India and Malaysia belonged to Britain. The Dutch were determined to recover their colony, and the British agreed that they should. Moreover, there was a precedent. Few probably then remembered it, but Britain had acted as Holland's custodian of Indonesia when Napoleon had occupied Holland. Honest Britain was replaying that role.

But the role to be played was not in the same drama. Liberating Holland was different from reimposing Dutch imperialism. Everyone sympathized with Holland because of what the Dutch had suffered under Nazi rule, but the Dutch officials and soldiers who had ruled Indonesia had not suffered in Holland. They had spent the war in Australia. They were not caught up in the emotions associated with liberation. They just wanted to recover their old ways of life in their colony. Their attitudes were far from those expressed by their queen in the midst of the war. In those dark days, Queen Wilhelmina had promised "to grant the people of the Dutch East Indies dominion status, with the right to self-rule and equality."[10]

But prudent men did not find liberation an attractive or even a realistic policy option. And the Indonesians helped them reach that conclusion because, having suddenly been released from Japanese control, the Indonesian people descended into a virtual civil war. Public order collapsed. The incoming British officials, who had very few soldiers at their disposal, even felt compelled to use the Japanese police and army to restore "order." The Japanese, also released from discipline and smarting from defeat, then began the sort of repressive operations—killing thousands of Indonesians—they had skillfully avoided during the war.[11] Embarrassed by their need to use these troops and by their brutality when used, the British welcomed the return of Dutch soldiers. They came quickly. Within a year, 150,000 Dutch troops had arrived.

Sukarno was in a weak position to oppose them because of his collaboration with the Japanese. The Dutch regarded him as a collaborationist, just like those who had helped the Nazis to tyrannize Holland. His wartime allies, the Japanese, were gone. And while he was well known in Indonesia, he was not then a dominant figure. Such followers as he could assemble had been kept out of military affairs by both the Dutch and the Japanese. They had no experience, the only arms they had were looted from the Japanese, and they had no sense of military organization or tactics. While the sepoys in India had been defeated in part because they had no generals, the Indonesians did not even have corporals.

My impression is that the Dutch troops despised the little bands of ill-armed amateurs they encountered. Like all defeated armies, they must have been keen to compensate for the humiliation of their defeat by the Japanese. We have seen the same motivation among the Russians after their defeat in the Crimean War, and our military officers experienced it after defeat in Vietnam. They certainly wanted to fight. And the Dutch colonial officials, eager to recapture the old ways, entirely agreed with them. No one seriously thought about negotiating a ceasefire with the hastily assembled rebels. In the

fighting that broke out all over the islands, thousands more Indonesians were killed. Terrified, many looked back nostalgically to the "good old days" of colonial rule.

Sukarno caught this shift in the public mood. He evacuated his new capital and declared that he was stepping down from the post of chief executive. Then, unannounced and still almost unknown, President Harry S. Truman intervened. Franklin D. Roosevelt had not concerned himself with Indonesia, but those around the presidency had suddenly discovered the Russian threat. Everywhere they looked, they found states about to fall like dominoes. American interests demanded that they be kept upright. Allies had to be found and then supported. Truman's advisers thought that what the Dutch wanted to do in Indonesia would surely knock over the dominos. To keep that from happening, Truman insisted that the Dutch give up their plan to reconquer Indonesia. Thus, ironically, it was the fear of a new entrant in the quest for empire that was forcing the end of an existing empire: imperialism was being defeated by a would-be imperial power.

The other imperialists were not pleased by what came to be called the Truman Doctrine, but their evaluation of it varied. The French were intent on avoiding the Dutch fate as they set about reconquering Indochina, and the British, deeply engaged in Indian, Palestinian, and Greek disasters and nearly bankrupt, felt forced to comply. In November 1946, the Dutch government bowed to the inevitable. But the Dutch army had not given up. In July 1947, the army attacked the area Sukarno had proclaimed to be the Republic of Indonesia and captured him. That action precipitated a new round of guerrilla warfare. Meanwhile, the United Nations brokered a ceasefire. The Dutch army broke the truce and on December 19, 1948, again attacked the Indonesians. That action convinced the American government that the Dutch must be forced to give up. Meanwhile, the United Nations undertook the task that would be so often imposed on it in the future, the brokering and monitoring of a peace deal.

Two days after Christmas in 1949, Sukarno finally was able to return to Jakarta to effect what he had long been proclaiming: real independence.

It had been a complex and bitter struggle, comparable in many ways to struggles in other parts of the Muslim world. Indonesia went through the common sequence. One after another the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the British, and then Japan—a power that was asserting its membership in the North—had invaded the South. Each had set about the systematic exploitation of a native society by a well-organized colonial administration. Mainly to maximize benefits and to reduce costs, the imperialists had allowed the joint training of a small cadre of natives. That resulted, group by group, in the unintended

“awakening” of the population. Inevitably, the privileged beneficiaries of the loosening of control began to agitate for independence. Their actions and their apparent weakness stimulated the imperial government to take action against and imprison its leaders. In these actions in Indonesia, the leaders of the states and colonies throughout the Muslim world rather suddenly found echoes of their own experiences.

The recognition of shared experiences would lead to the impressive uprising of the South against the North, the Non-Aligned Movement. It began with a preliminary conference Sukarno called in the city of Bogor, Java, in 1954. There, the so-called Colombo Powers decided to assemble the leaders of twenty-five countries of the South to plan their campaign to achieve parity with the North.[12] Those they planned to invite represented about one and a half billion people who occupied a quarter of the earth. The plenary sessions took place in the Indonesian city of Bandung over a week in April 1955.

Simply to have assembled the group was a stunning achievement: there were deep disagreements among the participants—Communist and Nationalist China, India and Pakistan, North and South Vietnam, rich states like Saudi Arabia and the very poor like Yemen and Afghanistan, and revolutionary governments and archconservatives.[13]

The attendees constituted a roster of the leaders of the South: Ahmad Ben Bella of Algeria, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Indira Gandhi of India, Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Carlos Romulo of the Philippines, Ho Chi-minh of Vietnam, Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus, Zhou Enlai of the People’s Republic of China, the grand mufti of Jerusalem, and the king of Cambodia.[14]

The meeting and the ensuing Non-Aligned Movement were great personal triumphs for Sukarno. He placed himself at the forefront of the liberation movement, but many Indonesians were deeply disturbed by what he was doing in domestic affairs. He began to enforce on his newly liberated fellow compatriots a system of “guided democracy” that some regarded as no great improvement on imperialism. In fact, his turn toward authoritarian rule was not exactly a turn.

Sukarno, like many of those engaged in the struggle for independence, had become accustomed to harsh measures to hold followers together and to suppress disagreements. Achieving unity had been an absolute imperative. To tolerate disagreement was to lose the struggle. The goal was taken, at least by the leaders, as justifying all means. We have seen how Imam Shamil, for an early example, fastened tyranny on his people in order to liberate them. Violence, guerrilla warfare, and terrorism are not good schools for democracy or civil liberties.

The struggle against imperialism fastened on post-imperial nations

some of the worst aspects of imperialism. The more bitter and the longer the struggle, the more pernicious the effect. Thus, almost without exception, the leaders of nationalist movements have disappointed those who had fought for freedom. In the South, few firebrands, as Americans had referred to Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, and Thomas Paine, kept their fires alive. Achievement of power became an end in itself. And, absent both a vigorous public and functioning civic institutions, leaders, like medieval armies, were more intent on looting the camps of the departed than on continuing their campaigns. The more successful they were, the further they moved from the ideals that had motivated their struggle. And, encased in reputations as fathers of their countries, they pushed aside or suppressed those who wanted to carry on the struggle. They often embodied the famous saying of the English historian Lord Acton, "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely." So it did in Indonesia.

Sukarno, like Abd al-Karim Qasim, prime minister of Iraq, became a "sole leader." The guided democracy he proposed in 1957 had more to do with guiding than with democracy. He promoted a new order of nationalism based on Java to control the nationalist forces of the whole country—his nationalism was in effect a move away from a broadly based, Indonesia-wide nationalism, the Indonesian equivalent of qawmiyah, to single-state nationalism based on Java, the Indonesian equivalent of wataniyah. Nationalists in Sumatra felt betrayed, and they petitioned for redress. Sukarno regarded their action as rebellion and imposed martial law. After a visit to China, he decided to ban all political parties other than the Communists and decisively turned against the Islam-based policies of his own youth.

As a result of his growing authoritarianism and particularly its anti-Muslim aspects, Sumatra exploded in a guerrilla movement. The Darul Islam bore some resemblance to the later Islamic State. Led by a Sufi by the name of Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo, Darul Islam proclaimed that independence was just a façade and that the secularism of the Sukarno government was really just another guise of the European way of life. Only if Sukarno were overthrown and Indonesia returned to—or converted to—Islamic fundamentalism would real independence be achieved, Kartosoewirjo believed.

Born just four years after Sukarno, Kartosoewirjo was also educated at Dutch schools, where he trained to be a doctor. Like Sukarno, he fell under the influence of the founder of the Indonesian Islamic Union, Oemar Said, and, also like Sukarno, he then founded his own party. Both men supported the Japanese during the Second World War, Sukarno mainly with organization and propaganda, while Kartosoewirjo created a Japanese-armed militia to guard against a

return of the Dutch army from Australia. Here their ways separated. Sukarno became a professional man, an architect and contractor, while Kartosoewirjo established an Islamic school. Reviewing their lives, one gets the feeling that Kartosoewirjo was a true believer, a man utterly dedicated to his chosen way, whereas Sukarno was more a man of the world. The differences in their lives, to simplify, are summed up in the phrase to which I have often alluded, din wa dunya —affairs of religion and worldly affairs. True believers tend to despise the men of the world, and the men of the world tend to fear true believers. True believers everywhere have limited life-spans: Sukarno bent, picked his fights with care, and survived; Kartosoewirjo staked out an unyielding position, essentially the rigid view of Islamic fundamentalism, which frightened Indonesians more than Dutch imperialism had done, and he ended before a firing squad in 1962.

CHAPTER 26

Afghanistan's Centuries of Resistance

Far off from Sekarmadji Maridjan Kartosoewirjo's Java, in the mountains and valleys of Afghanistan, another group of true believers had created a much more powerful movement. As we shall see, they did this with most of the ideas found in Darul Islam but also with a tribal society with a tradition of independence like that of the Chechen Sufi movement of Imam Shamil. Like the Caucasian mountain societies, the Afghans had never been ruled by the North.

According to most Western observers, Afghans have no concept of themselves as a "nation"; therefore, to speak of Afghan nationalism is unjustified. Some visitors have described Afghanistan as just a Mafia state whose inhabitants kill one another or luckless foreigners as a pastime. Others have written that the Afghans are simply xenophobic, so what we call nationalism is nothing but hatred of foreigners. I find these views superficial and sterile—superficial in that their proponents fail to understand the Afghan way, and sterile in that the views fail to lead to a better understanding of why Afghans act as they do. Moreover, in looking at nations that did not emerge from the societies of Western Europe, one must always be cautious in applying the definitions that have been developed from the European experience. Such definitions are often helpful as means to stimulate thought but should not be used to substitute for thought. They are often misleading. Human affairs are not a dictionary in which actions have only one definition. So here I will enunciate what I have found in over half a century of observation and study.

"SAVE ME FROM MY FRIENDS!"

During the middle years of the nineteenth century, Russia and Britain fought a sort of gentleman's war known as the Great Game for control of Afghanistan. The Afghans fought either or both when forced but played on imperial rivalry when they could. This cartoon illustrating the Afghan dilemma was published in the London magazine *Punch* in 1878, but with some changes it might have referred to the Russian invasion of 1979 and the American invasion of 2001.

First, let me dispose of the canard of xenophobia. I have traveled throughout Afghanistan and have visited scores of villages. Never was I greeted with hostility. I was welcomed, fed at what to the poor inhabitants must have been ruinous expense, and entertained to the limited degree possible with folk music and stories. A fundamental obligation of the culture shared by Afghans (and by Arabs, Berbers, and many other peoples of the South under different titles) is what the Afghans call *melmastia.* Melmastia is hospitality, but hospitality defined more broadly than the English word suggests, to include protection. Hosts will feed their guests even if doing so risks the hosts' own starvation, and they will protect their guests even if doing so puts their own lives at risk. These actions, as I discuss later, are absolute requirements of the code of honor, and to fail in upholding them brings terrible shame.

The English, Russians, and Americans were accorded melmastia when they arrived in peace; during their invasions and occupations, foreigners were not so well received. My travels around Afghanistan were before the Russian and American invasions. Obviously, I was not trying to dominate, despoil, or kill my hosts; they greeted me warmly. They showed me that they did not hate foreigners, but they showed

foreign soldiers that they hated invaders.

There is a well-known folk saying that summarizes the Afghan attitude on foreign invaders: "The first Englishman comes as a hunter; the second Englishman comes to draw maps; the third Englishman guides an army. Better to kill the first Englishman."

Of these, the Afghans killed all the Englishmen they could catch during the British invasion of 1839–1842; of the Russians in 1979–1989 they killed about fifteen thousand; and of the Americans from 2001 to the present they have killed about two thousand. Obviously, they were fighting to preserve their country and their way of life, that is, to protect their nation and their nationalism. But was this indeed the case?

To answer that question, we must begin by recognizing that historians, journalists, and other observers are often trapped both by their *regional* history and by their *recent* history to define nationalism in European terms. Those terms do not precisely fit in Afghanistan. What is evident in Afghanistan is the sort of primitive nationhood that probably existed almost everywhere throughout the world before the formation of nation-states in Europe after the sixteenth century. Indeed, the formation of nation-states and the enunciation of their ideological or emotional justification did not take place even in much of Europe until the nineteenth century. That chronology suggests that our definition of nationalism applies only to something like 3 or 4 percent of "history" and a thousandth of 1 percent of the human experience. To use the modern Western concept of nationalism as a sort of barrier to exclude other kinds of expression of the love of country and the determination to preserve its culture is, it seems to me, a poor approach. So here I will lay out what I understand of the model common in the South of the world—and, indeed, of the entire world until recently.

Almost all of our ancestors defined themselves like the Afghans have done, as members of villages or clans. These were the "nations" of our ancestors. As I have shown in my discussion of the more articulated nationalism of Arabs, Iranians, Turks, Malays, and others, even the words used for "nation" originally meant "village" (watan) or "clan" (qawm).

Much of the energies of all premodern and many modern people went into defending themselves and their territories against strangers. If they failed to do so, they were overrun, conquered, or exterminated. Our ancestors, like those of the Afghans, were the survivors. What motivated the survivors was devotion, fear, and custom, which amounted in spirit and action to what elsewhere and in more modern terms we have called "nationalism." So, putting aside the labels, one can analyze Afghan society more realistically. I see four levels of

organization: first, villages or tribes; second, what might be thought of as joint ventures of villages and tribes in the face of recognized danger; third, the occasional assemblage into something resembling a state; and, fourth, the increasing number of people who fairly recently have been detached from their villages and tribes by continuous war. I turn first to the village.

In Afghanistan, tribes are not nomadic like the bedouin and Tuwareg of the Middle East. Tribal peoples are villagers, but villagers who traditionally moved or sent some of their members with their livestock between the lowlands to the mountains according to the seasons. They also sent out groups of warriors to fight, sometime also on a seasonal timetable. So to draw a distinction between tribesmen and villagers is usually not as useful as I have suggested it is for other parts of the Muslim world.

Historically and still today, about four in five Afghans live in the roughly twenty-two thousand villages that dot the countryside wherever there is sufficient water to sustain life. When I first traveled throughout Afghanistan in 1962, it seemed to me that one could visualize it as a rugged hill covered by twenty-two thousand Ping-Pong balls. Each "ball," each village, was autarkic, discrete, and inwardly focused. No single ball depended on or could dominate the others. They could be knocked about by outsiders, but it was rare that what was done to one affected the others.

As I visited numbers of these villages, talked with many of their headmen, observed how they ran their affairs, and read accounts by other visitors, I found that they knew or cared very little about villages even just a few miles away. Of course, given the rugged terrain of the country, even neighbors were sometimes virtually inaccessible. On the key determinant of autonomy, marriage, I was told that few married outside their immediate surroundings. I had found exactly this pattern, as I have mentioned, in the Lebanese mountain village I had earlier studied. Consequently, kinship ties tended to be intense within groups but often almost nonexistent among them.

The economy was also necessarily local. Until recently, movement among villages was nearly always difficult and frequently dangerous. Roads were few. Mountains were high and rugged, and valleys were deep and narrow; flatlands were often divided by canals and walls into what amounted to mazes. When I drove into the Hindu Kush mountains, the "road" I followed was so narrow that the Jeep frequently had to be backed up to get around hairpin turns, and often I was just inches away from a drop down a cliff hundreds of feet deep. Before the time of Jeeps, and even today, villagers seldom made such trips. They ate their own produce, made their own clothes, and passed

down from generation to generation their tools and weapons. Villagers clung tenaciously to their few fertile acres of land just as the ancient Greeks in the warring states had clung to theirs. They had to because the alternative was starvation.

On their barren mountains and foothills, Afghans had to be eagles to survive. So every experience, every instinct, turned them inward to their immediate relatives. Just beyond the next hill were enemies whose hands were always raised against them. Hands did not stray far from trigger or hilt. The Greeks felt the same way. And, like the ancient Greek and Italian Renaissance cities, the Afghan villages were effectively, whether by name or not, nations.

As I have pointed out, recognition of this reality is what caused the first people who put a word to it, the Egyptians, to ascribe something like the Western concept of the nation to the common word for "village," the *watan.* Until recently, if you had asked an Egyptian peasant the name of his watan, it would never have occurred to him to say Egypt. He would have replied with the name of his village. That same sentiment pertained in Afghanistan.

I was struck, as all visitors have been, by the fact that the Afghans, who had so little to hold life together, were fiercely independent. In their three attempts to conquer the Afghans, the British learned just how fiercely they guarded their independence. One of their defeats was the worst the British army experienced in the nineteenth century. And, in the decade-long war the Russians began in 1979, they found that they could crush any number of "Ping-Pong balls"—they killed about a million Afghans and drove about three million out of the country—but they could never negotiate more than a truce, village by village, with the Afghans. Whatever one wishes to call the sentiment that kept the Afghans going—and it is hard to avoid the word "nationalism"—they defeated what was then a modern, heavily armed superpower. Worn out, the *Shuravi*, as the Afghans called the Russians, retreated across the Amu Darya, leaving behind the bodies of about fifteen thousand of their soldiers.

Above the village level, Afghans find identity also in tribal confederations. Suggestively but roughly, belonging to a confederation might be compared to identifying with a province. As with the Arabs and Berbers, such confederations are usually called into being by threats from or attacks by outsiders. As anthropologists have pointed out in Africa, confederations come into effect when members are challenged by similar groups or groups they regard as similar. Thus, in the long war in the Northwest Frontier (the unconquered area between Afghanistan and Pakistan), tribesmen confronted the Anglo-Indian army, which, in their terms, was a sort of tribal confederation. So the men of various tribes joined together to fight it. In relatively

peaceful times, which were rare, tribal confederations were more expressions of sentiment than of activity.

Further up the scale, Afghanistan, or most of what today is considered to be Afghanistan, was ruled by what we think of as national governments. The first "modern" ruler was elected in 1747 by a tribal assembly, a *jirga.* By general consent, Ahmad Shah Abdali (who was also known Ahmad Shah Durani) is regarded as the father of the Afghan state. But Afghans conceived of what today we consider to be national activity not in terms of states but rather in terms of dynasties (*dawlahs*) whose regimes were the entourage or household of the ruler. Those who cared for the ruler's person, by extension, were his "staff" for other activities. Henry VIII would have been more likely to understand Afghan government than many modern political scientists.

The process of leadership at each of these three levels was anchored in tradition. At the village level, there was by convention an individual who, due to his age, wealth, or reputation, was recognized as a guide. He was not, however, a ruler. He had no means to force his fellow townsmen, who were his kin, to do his bidding. But he was influential because his neighbors were inevitably faced with disputes that arose over the use of water, determination of boundaries of plots of land, payments of debts, formation or breakup of marriages, and division of inheritances. Such issues of daily life could not be resolved with a gun or a knife. To deal with them, the Afghans—like a number of colonial or pre-Western peoples, from Hindu villagers in India all the way to the Native American Iroquois—adopted arbitrage. Under the supervision of a respected elder, the adult males would gather in what the Pashtuns called a *jirga,* the Hazaras called an *ulus,* and the Panshiris and others called a *shura.* Similar village councils operated in Palestine, where they were known as the *ikhtiyariyah,* and in India, Bangladesh, and Nepal, where they were known as *panchayet-i raj.*[1]

These town councils come together when pressing issues cannot be resolved by the local headman or a respected religious figure. They are the Afghan version of participatory democracy, and when they act they are seen to embody the "way" or sunnah of their communities. The members are not elected but are accorded their status by consensus. Such councils are not, in our sense of the word, institutions; rather, they are occasions. They happen only when they are needed.

Meeting with the assembly, a litigant would present his case; its merits would then be discussed. Often the discussion itself would effect a resolution because tensions could be worked off gradually as the litigants argued their positions. Finally, a consensus would be reached. Then life could return to normal because it was considered

sinful to oppose the decision of the jirga. Anyone who refused to abide by the consensus of the community risked losing his membership in the community and, upon being forced out, would literally become an outlaw without any protection. In a tribal society, expulsion was often tantamount to a death sentence.

Since not all problems were local, assemblies were occasionally convened between or among villages. These might serve to settle feuds or disputes over water, land, or livestock. And they were sometimes called into being by the threat of foreign invasion.[2]

On what the British called the Northwest Frontier in what is now the little state of Swat, in 1835 a religious leader warned an assembly of his fellow villagers that the British were laying the foundations of imperialism and urged the creation of a force to stop them. This was the origin of the Taliban movement. The consensus reached was that their religiously educated young men (*taliban*) would become warriors of the faith, mujahidin, and engage in a jihad against the British and their Sikh Punjabi allies.

A few years later, when the British had occupied Kabul, another jirga was called to deal with a similar threat. For months, the Afghans felt humiliated and were growing furious. The problem that triggered their gathering and led to their action was that one of the senior British officers had given himself up to the delights that imperial rule could offer, flaunting his lavish eating and drinking, keeping a harem, and even dallying with the wives, lovers, and daughters of Afghan notables. His activities posed a dangerous dilemma: to do nothing in response was shameful, but almost any action was apt to bring reprisals from the powerful British army. This was a bigger issue than any one outraged man could handle. Community consensus was necessary. That required a jirga.

At the jirga the plaintiff demanded justice for his having been beaten by British soldiers when he tried to retrieve his lover, who had been taken in by a British official. Since she was just a slave girl, what to do about her was debatable; but since the man had been beaten, and so humiliated, the issue of vengeance (*badal*) was not debatable. Moreover, as the plaintiff pointed out, this was just the first step in a process in which the British would have "all of us arrested shortly and deported into foreign imprisonment. . . . If success rewards us, then that is as we wished; and if we die in battle, that is still better than to live with degradation and dishonour."[3] The Afghan folk saying suggested the right answer: it was better to kill the first Englishman.

Of course, the members of the jirga could not then have known exactly the British plan, but they observed British actions and it seemed to them that their aggrieved companion—and the folk saying—were right, so the members rushed to the house of the British

official and killed him.

Subsequently, a presumed spokesman for the jirga wrote to the British commander urging the British to let the Afghans govern the country "according to their own rules, and with a king of their own choosing." [4] The British spurned the advice. As the contemporary English historian John William Kaye wrote in his classic account of the Anglo-Afghan war, "Throughout the entire period of British connection with Afghanistan, a strange moral blindness clouded the visions of our statesmen. . . . Our conduct was calculated to alarm and incense them to the extremest point of fear and irritation; and yet we talked of their childish distrust and their unprovoked hostility."[5] The British attempted to divide the Afghans and subvert their jirga, but soon they realized that "the whole country [was] in arms against us." [6] As the British envoy Sir William Macnaghten wrote to the governor-general of India, the Afghans exhibited the "strongest feelings of national hatred and religious abhorrence. . . . They were not to be bought by British gold, or deluded by British promises . . . not to be reduced to loyalty by Douranne Kings [the British-appointed rulers-to-be], nor to subjection by foreign bayonets."[7]

British bayonets were, of course, to be feared, but the Afghans were giving the first of the lessons they would give to the British in three wars, to the Russians, and today to the Americans. They were redoubtable fighters. With dismay, Lieutenant Vincent Erye reported that "the Ghzees [*ghazis* or warriors] completely broke the square." The square was the ultimate defensive formation of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century armies. As Erye writes, "All have heard of the British squares at Waterloo, which defied the repeated desperate onsets of Napoleon's choicest cavalry. At Beymaroo [outside Kabul] we formed squares to resist the distant fire of infantry, thus presenting a solid mass against the aim of perhaps the best marksmen in the world." The British troops "finally gave way."[8] Later, so did the Russians. Whether Americans in our day will too is still unknown, but all of us, the British, the Russians, and the Americans, have painfully and at great expense learned that the Afghans will not.

The British position had become desperate. Supplies of food were nearly exhausted, fort after bunker had been overrun, the troops, both English and Indian were dispirited, and many had gone over to the Afghans. Finally, but too late, the senior British official, Macnaghten, decided to try a ruse. He made an offer to evacuate the country, ostensibly a diplomatic move but actually a means to delay the Afghans in the hope that they would fight among themselves or that a British relieving force would arrive in time to save the Kabul garrison and its ten thousand or so camp followers. Macnaghten crossed the British lines to meet with the Afghan chiefs—whom he said "might be

considered the mouth-piece of the people," that is, although he did not use the term, a jirga—to propose new terms.[9] The terms the British offered were read out to the Afghan leaders. The British would leave, but leave under terms that the Afghans found humiliating. They would have to pay a yearly subsidy to the ruler the British had installed, whom the Afghans regarded as a traitor, and an "amnesty should be granted to all those who had made themselves obnoxious on account of their attachment to Shah Shoojah and his allies, the British."[10] Even worse than the terms, British deceit was evident. Their agents in the British camp apparently informed them that the British were engaged in subversion, were attempting to bribe some of their fellow chiefs, planned an ambush of the others, and even were considering a deal with the Russians to divide the country. Unbeknownst to the British, a jirga had been held and decided against dealing with the British. So the British did what was not acceptable in the dealings of a jirga.

The Afghans pretended to agree, but they knew they had the British firmly in their grip. The growing desperation of the British was evident, and the Afghans were growing surer of themselves. The British had delayed too long. So the Afghans put aside the partially agreed-on terms—and did so violently. In the final confrontation, they seized Macnaghten. As one of the staff officers, Captain Colin Mackenzie, wrote to Erye, the khans tried to protect Macnaghten, but "a crowd of fanatic Ghazees [*ghazis* or warriors], . . . on seeing the affray, had rushed to the spot, calling aloud for the blood of the hated infidels, aiming at them desperate blows with their long knives and other weapons, and [were] only deterred from firing by the fear of killing a chief. . . . [Then,] determined not to disappoint the public expectation altogether,—influenced also by his tiger passions, and remembrance of his father's wrongs [that is, wrongs done to his father],—Mahomed Akber [Muhammad Akbar] drew a pistol, the Envoy's [Macnaghten's] own gift a few hours before, and shot him through the body, which was immediately hacked to pieces by the ferocious Ghazees."[11]

Even in these hate-filled events, the most ferocious of the "ferocious Ghazees," Muhammad Akbar, was constrained by the Afghan code of melmastia, which required the protection of a man who asked for it. When Captain Mackenzie grabbed Akbar's stirrup—the sign of demanding protection—"Muhammad Akbar Khan drew his sword and laid about him right manfully [while his retainers] were obliged to press me up against the wall, covering me with their own bodies, and protesting that no blow should reach me but through their persons." Akbar, wrote Mackenzie, "then turned round to me, and repeatedly said in a tone of triumphant derision, '*Shuma moolk-i-ma me geered!*'

(*You'll* seize my country, will you!)"[12] But, after this outburst, astonishingly, Akbar disguised Mackenzie in Afghan clothes and allowed him to return to the British fortifications unharmed. Melmastia was dominant over anger, it was a personal imperative, it protected the man who had sought protection, but it did not extend to other foreigners.

After Macnaghten's death, the other British officers were accused of treachery—particularly of trying to split the Afghan khans, as Macnaghten was known to have been doing—and were told "that they would now [be granted] no terms, save on the surrender of the whole [of the force] with married families as hostages, all the guns, ammunition, and treasure."[13] A jirga was assembled and offered the British slightly more favorable terms: families would be allowed to leave if hostages replaced them and reparations were paid to the Afghans. The British refused.

Finally, on January 6, 1842, as Lieutenant Erye recounted, "the fatal morning dawned" after the siege of two months, with most of the British, particularly their Indian soldiers and camp followers, already near starvation and wading through the deep snow. About 4,500 soldiers were still alive and were joined by some 12,000 camp followers "besides women and children." Some two thousand pack animals carried such supplies as the British forces still had. But they could hardly move. The "mingled mob of soldiers, camp-followers, and baggage-cattle," in some seventeen hours of painful march, made only five miles. Meanwhile, Afghan tribesmen followed close behind to loot supplies and pick off stragglers. From the hills, other tribesmen "maintained a harassing fire" with their *jazail* long rifles.[14]

What the Afghans were doing was essentially a reenactment of the Spanish guerrillas' attacks on Napoleon's army in Spain and the Russian partisan destruction of Napoleon's army in Russia. But it was even more dramatic—and conclusive. Of the roughly sixteen thousand Anglo-Indian troops, English families, and various camp followers who set out, only one man reached the British fort at Jalalabad. War had rallied the nation and enforced the decision of the jirga.

In Afghan practice, there was also another sort of jirga. It was convened to deal with issues of national importance. It would draw widely from the members of an ethnic or tribal federation or even beyond. Then the gathering was termed a *loya jirga.* This was the type of assembly that was convened in 1747 to legitimate the new ruler. The loya jirga might be thought of as the Afghan version of a constitutional assembly or a supreme court.

In 2002 the Americans did just as the British had done in 1839 and the Russians did in the 1986: they selected an Afghan ruler who was agreeable to them. The Americans attempted to convene a loya jirga

to legitimate their choice. But the members refused. Nearly two-thirds of the delegates signed a petition to make the aging king Zaher Shah, then in exile, the interim head of state. Deliberately putting aside the jirga and depreciating its importance, the American representative, Zalmay Khalilzad, who was himself an Afghan, ignored it. Exercising massive interference behind the scenes in the form of bribes, secret deals, and arm-twisting, Khalilzad got America's candidate, Hamid Karzai, installed instead.

The 2004 constitution, drafted by the Americans and believed by the Afghans to be a sham, did contain a concession to tradition by specifying that "the *loya jirga* is the highest manifestation of the will of the people of Afghanistan." It was that sense of nationhood that the American government and its military commanders flouted.

Left to itself, Afghanistan is governed by what might be thought of as a constitution, the traditional sense of national culture. This unwritten but shared set of concepts of the Afghan way amounts to a sort of national charter, or what Jean-Jacques Rousseau called a "social contract."

That social contract or way of life is embedded in a social code (known in the Pashtun areas as Pashtunwali) that shapes the particular form of Islam they have practiced for centuries. While there are notable differences in the way it is interpreted in the Pashtun, Hazara, Aimak, Uzbek, and Tajik areas, shared tradition determines how all Afghans govern themselves and react to foreigners.

In recent times, as I have suggested, a fourth level of Afghan society has emerged. The people who make up this group are the detribalized inhabitants of the cities and towns, people who have lost or are in the process of losing their contact with the villages and tribes from which they or their ancestors came. Their numbers have risen dramatically since the 1960s, when they sought a better standard of living as a result of economic development projects, the opening of schools and health facilities, and access to other amenities. Then, after the Russian invasion in 1979, the almost continuous civil wars that followed the Russian withdrawal forced large numbers to flee from particularly dangerous areas to what they mistakenly thought were safer urban areas. The scale and speed of change has been astonishing: when I first visited Kabul in 1962, its population was about fifty thousand; today it is approaching four million. To what degree these uprooted people can be integrated into the nation remains to be seen, but integration will become one of the most decisive issues in Afghanistan's future. If the nation is completely torn away from its traditional national bearings, a process already fully under way, the future will remain chaotic.

Whatever the outcome, Afghans today are probably more

discouraged than outsiders can imagine with the answers that nationalism has provided for their malaise. Above all, they have not freed their society from outside control or from the agents of foreigners.

The failure to achieve what many, indeed probably most, Afghans see as the minimal task of secular nationalism resulted in the past and in my view is almost certain to result in the near future in the combination of nationalism and Islam. In Afghanistan, this is the movement known as the Taliban, so called for its foot soldiers.

The word *taliban* means simply "students." Tens of thousands of students were trained in religious schools all over the Muslim world. In Pakistan, it is believed that perhaps as many as thirty thousand or forty thousand schools or study groups are in operation. They are inspired by the Deobandi order; in Bukhara they were led by the Naqshbandi order and in North Africa by the Sanusi order. Most of the schools offered the Islamic equivalent of primary education, a narrow focus on reading and memorizing the Quran. Since the text before them was in Arabic, which few of the pupils understood, it was the flow of repeated sounds that mattered. This was the experience Ziya Gökalp discussed among the Turks, as I have shown in Chapter 21. In the Sufi manner the young boys were virtually hypnotized. They were thus galvanized into a unified, dedicated group that could be drawn on by their Sufi masters to form an organization or, in due course, an army.[15]

Poorer families were attracted by the schools because many could not afford to keep "extra" children at home. Nor could they often afford to send the children to the public schools, which, in any case, were rare in rural areas. And many of the schools boarded and fed their students. As we have seen, it was to bring the opportunity for secular education to the Pakistanis that Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto made his greatest contribution. But, impressive as it was, his program left the educational needs of hundreds of thousands of Pakistanis unmet. Attempts by later Pakistani governments have been thwarted by the Islamic tradition that regards education as a nongovernmental endeavor.[16] The religious schools were open to all. But "education" in them came at a price.

The price was the conditioning of the students into a group with a single and narrow view of life. Knowing so little about the world, they concluded that it was of little consequence, while the transcendental aim of Islam was all important. And, having been subjected by their teachers to strict discipline and influenced by the model of their classmates, they would do as they were ordered to do, regardless of the consequences. And they spoke and thought in terms that the tribesmen admired but did not copy. Thus, in battle after battle, they

provided “stiffing” when tribesmen were apt to be more careful. When the tribesmen and the taliban meshed, they became a powerful force comparable to the force brought together by the Prophet Muhammad when he used his true believers to weld the tribesmen of Arabia into an army. They were similar to the *mulids* (Sufi militants) who enabled Imam Shamil to build his resistance army from Caucasian villagers and the Sanusi devotees who helped Imam Umar al-Mukhtar to forge his guerrilla force to fight the Italians.

Thoughtless, rigid education based on the rote memorization of texts whose meaning they were not expected to understand provided exactly what military commanders want: men who unquestioningly do what they are told to do. Cut off from “normal” society either by their teachers or by their enemies, the Afghan Taliban became a nation in arms but one without a set territory.

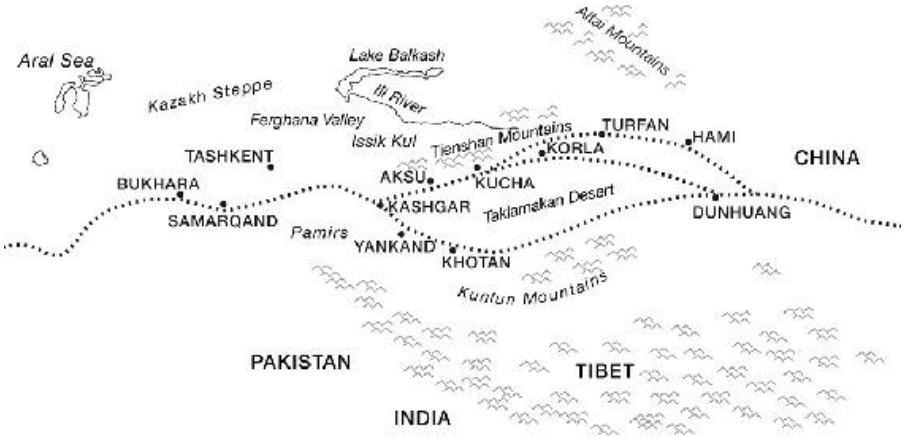
Quite different were the peoples who lived in the oases in the Tarim Basin around the great Taklamakan Desert in Central Asia. History, geography, and the environment combined to make them little states but not a nation.

CHAPTER 27

The Silk Road

Central Asia is history's great highway. There is increasing evidence that the early waves of human migrations that have shaped our world, those of the Dravidians (five thousand to six thousand years ago) and the Indo-Europeans (beginning around three thousand years ago), either originated around it or passed along it. Later the Germanic tribal peoples—the Franks, the Goths, the Vandals, and the Huns—followed their trail into the Roman Empire, where they gave birth to the peoples of Europe. And still later, others, the Turkish tribal peoples, pushed into the Muslim world of the South. Central Asia was crossed by the great trade route of ancient times, the Silk Road. Pilgrims, merchants, and war parties trod that route long before history was recorded.

But not everyone moved. While much of the area is barren, scattered oases and areas fed by melting snow allowed settlement. Little groups formed their own societies, elaborated their own cultures, and spoke their own languages or dialects. They were conquered by empire after empire from at least that of the Han Chinese about two thousand years ago, and in medieval times they suffered from the armies of Genghis Khan and his descendants. When their heavy hand began to be lifted, the resident societies resumed their way of life, reforming their broken organizations into village communities and town- or city-states on the old sites. Then, driven by the same needs, divided by the vast extent of the area, and isolated by the difficulties of travel, they again became economically autarkic, politically autonomous communities but, over the last thousand or so years, they were tied to one another by language and religion. Everywhere, the Turkish language and the religion of Islam forged cultural links among them.



The historic trade routes from the Mediterranean to China across Central Asia were known as the Silk Road; shown here are the oasis cities inhabited by the Turkish-speaking Uyghurs. China and Russia divided the area between themselves. North of the lofty Tienshan mountains, what had been the habitat of the Zunghar people became, after the Chinese slaughtered them, the Kazakh steppe.

From time to time, particularly populous and wealthy city-states would absorb their smaller neighbors and duplicate, on a smaller scale, the empires of the Mongols and Turks. Thus it was with the city-states of Bukhara, Tashkent, Khiva, Samarqand, Khoqand, Kashgar, Khotan, Aksu, and Turfan. But, particularly after the beginning of the nineteenth century, the mutual hostility of these khanates opened the way for Russian and Chinese penetration. Consider this process in the experience of Bukhara.

In medieval times, Bukhara had been a major center of Muslim education. It was said to have had about two hundred religious schools (madrassas) and perhaps as many as ten thousand students (taliban) drawn from all over Central Asia. It was the cultural center of the area from the Tarim Basin to the Black Sea. Despite all the turmoil of later centuries, its inhabitants retained this cultural halo; it would allow them to take part in the great issues—the struggle to maintain their cultural identity and national independence—that challenged the whole Muslim world in the nineteenth century.

As it emerged in the nineteenth century, Bukhara city had fifty thousand to one hundred thousand inhabitants; its ruler held sway over a large but diverse area in which a dozen or so cities and towns were virtually autonomous. The majority of the population of Bukhara city and of the city-state as a whole were Uzbek Turks, but a surprising variety of other ethnic groups, including Indians, Persians, and Jews, were resident. The Turks were uniformly Sunnis, but the one in three who were Tajiks were Shiis. As one of the early Western travelers, the Hungarian Turcologist Arminius Vámbèry, observed in 1863, “The beauty and wealth of the bazaar were not the things that

surprised me, so much as the immense and multifarious variety in races, dress and manners which struck the eye everywhere."[1]

Despite its variety, Bukhara's population was tightly controlled. The state was "ruled by a hereditary monarch in accordance with Moslem religious law and custom . . . [with] a highly organized central administration and a large degree of provincial autonomy."[2] Central rigidity and peripheral flexibility were reactions to the disasters of the previous century, when another Turkish people, the Kazakhs, raided, occupied, and nearly destroyed Bukhara. When the Kazakhs left after almost a decade of ravaging the area, an Iranian army invaded and attacked Bukhara. A local government was restored, but for years it was too weak to recapture its former domain. We do not know much about the confusing period that followed, but in the neighboring city-state of Khiva, which shared a ruling family, there was, apparently for the first time, a genuine popular uprising. And, at the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth, something like a sense of nationhood could be detected in the move by the large landowners to secure their properties from the ruling dynasty and from the surrounding nomads. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Bukhara had a small army drawn from its urban population. Thus, the turmoil and the challenge of the landowners led to a quest for stability and security. This appears to have been answered by the despotic monarchy Vámbèry observed in 1863.

As in the contemporary Ottoman Empire, Bukhara's religious establishment was treated as a separate but state-appointed bureaucracy whose tasks were to man the law courts and teach in the schools. The only politically significant group outside the two bureaucracies was made up of merchants and landowners. Life was ordered, foreign influences were fended off, and, if there were dissidents who tried to break the mold in which they were formed and lived, they were eliminated.

But Bukhara would not be left to pursue its own way of life.

To outsiders, Bukhara seemed an immensely exciting "oriental" destination. To visit it was the dream of the intrepid English officers of the Indian Political Office who rode there from India on horseback.[3] For them, it was romantic; for the ruler of Bukhara, their arrival seemed dangerous. Not unreasonably, the ruler was worried equally about their possible subversion of his people with modern ideas and about their spying. I have quoted the saying that is attributed to an Afghan but also applies to the thoughts of the ruler of Bukhara: "The first Englishman comes to hunt; the second Englishman comes to draw a map; the third Englishman leads an army. Better to kill the first Englishman." So it was that in 1842, Bukhara's ruler executed a serving British officer and the clergyman who had come to rescue him.

Because India was the jewel in the British crown, English statesmen were constantly searching for a wall or moat to defend it. Their search led them steadily northward from the Indian plains into Afghanistan, Iran, the Ottoman Empire, and Central Asia. Always elusive, the barrier they sought against Russia involved them in what is known as the Great Game. Quixotic and dangerous, the adventures of the players caught the fancy of the English public—and frightened the rulers of the Asian states—but they had little effect on politics in Asia.

More serious was the march of armies. Tsar Ivan IV, "the Terrible," began the march into Asia when in 1552 his army conquered Kazan. Ironically, as judged by future events, it was an English merchant, Anthony Jenkinson, who acted as a broker in encouraging Russian entry into Central Asia. He took a letter from the shah to the rulers of Bukhara and Khiva and brought delegations from them back to Moscow. That event marked the beginning of diplomatic relations and trade between the empire and the khanates.

Coincident with or shortly after these contacts, Russian settlers began to filter into Kazakh grazing lands in the great steppe of Central Asia. This was a movement like that of the American settlers on Indian lands in the Great Plains and had much the same result: raids and counterraids, guerrilla warfare, and counterinsurgency. The movement of Russian settlers, the weakness of the native societies, and rumors of the existence of gold convinced Peter the Great in 1715 to send two military missions into Central Asia. Both were catastrophes. The people of Khiva annihilated one force, killing about three thousand Russian soldiers, while the other was mauled by Mongol tribesmen.

The Mongols were also attacking the Kazakhs. This gave the Russians an opportunity to offer them protection. Exactly what they meant by "protection" was probably not then understood, but a number of tribes took oaths of allegiance that became a justification for subsequent Russian intervention. Apprehensive about this intervention, the khanates began a counterthrust among the Kazakhs to try to keep them out of Russian hands. So began the clashes that would lead to Russian campaigns in Central Asia. The Russians adopted a broad strategy that would eventually involve them in all of the area. Most moves led them toward the Ottoman Empire and Iran, but one wing of their advance moved east in 1871 into the upper Ili valley, which was inhabited by the Uyghur Turks and so would lead to conflict with the Qing dynasty of China. Britain offered the Chinese advice on how to the fight the Russians, and the Germans sold them arms. The Chinese forced Russia to give back the Ili area in the 1881 Treaty of Saint Petersburg.

During this time, Russia was undergoing major changes. By liberating the serfs, it had created economic forces that gave it a stake

in Central Asian settlement and trade, where it ran into competition from British India. And, following the Crimean War, its military leaders were determined to restore their badly battered prestige. Glory (and promotions) could be won in Central Asia. So, strategically, in terms of real national interests in commerce, and emotionally, in terms of pride, Central Asia became an area of national importance to the Russians. They took the first step in 1864 when they agreed to divide the area with the Chinese Qing dynasty.

It was to take the Russians a generation to conquer their part. Piece by piece, they took tribal areas and khanates, and, although we know little about public reaction, it appears that a sort of national debate erupted between the merchant community, which wanted to profit from trade with Russia, and the rulers of the still-independent states, who wanted to remain independent. Missing the opportunity that the split offered, the Russians arrested all the merchants they could catch and confiscated their goods. Opposition stiffened and the Russians were defeated in their first assault on the khanate of Bukhara in 1866. In response, they redoubled their military efforts and appointed a governor-general who was far more tyrannical than the native despots had ever been. Like the British in India, the Russians in Central Asia turned their designated puppet ruler into a viceroy—or "half emperor" (Turkish: *yarim padeshah*), as he was called among the population—and gave their merchants more or less what capitulations had given English and French merchants in the Ottoman Empire, virtual extraterritorial privileges.[4]

However little the natives had participated in political affairs before, they reacted as strongly as they could against the Russians. There were popular uprisings both among the tribesmen in a traditional form and, in a more unconventional way, among the settled and partly urban population of the Fergana Valley. The uprising there was led by a religious leader (mullah) known as Polad Khan, who tried to play the role assumed by the great North African Muslim leaders, but the Russians quickly defeated his forces and executed him. What might have become a serious resistance movement died with him.

The Russians then moved against the Teke Turkmen and slaughtered large numbers of them, virtually wiping out their society. The advance continued to Panjdeh on the edge of what is today Afghanistan. It seemed at the time that Russia had reached the limits of its conquest of Central Asia. They amalgamated much of the vast area into their empire, but, like the British in India, they found it cheaper and easier to create a special status between independence and incorporation for some of the existing principalities. Bukhara was given this special status. It enabled the city to resume at least in part

its medieval role as a cultural center. As Seymour Becker has written,

> The occupation of "Bukhara the Noble," the religious capital of Central Asia, would have greatly enhanced Russia's prestige among her Moslem subjects and neighbors. . . . [But] occupation of the remainder of the khanate could probably have been carried out only at great cost and with much bloodshed in view of the anti-Russian feeling in Bukhara and the turbulent internal state of the country.[5]

Perhaps the Russians had less to worry about than they thought. As one of the most astute and experienced observers of Central Asia, Geoffrey Wheeler, has written,

> The concept of the nation state or even of nationalism barely penetrated either the Steppe Region or Turkestan until after the abrupt ending of the Tsarist regime in 1917. Consequently, the Tsarist Government was never confronted by the need for compromising with nationalist movements, for granting real or synthetic self-determination to the non-Russian nationalities, or for justifying the retention of imperial domination in the face of world opinion.[6]

To the diplomats and strategists, the question that seemed to remain was how to adjust arrangements among the imperialists. Uniquely, this was a tripartite issue because China also was a party. The "pie" of Central Asia had to be sliced into at least three parts. Before it was so complicated, the Russians had taken the lead in 1844 by offering a deal to the British, but with the advance of Russian armies and the consolidation of its rule in the following years, the Russian proposal had lapsed. It was taken up anew a quarter of a century later by the viceroy of India. He tried to convince the government in London to seek a division of Central Asia into spheres of influence. The plan did not fly. It was too vague. It was then modified by another viceroy, who envisaged the creation of a belt of independent khanates, but the idea never got fully planned and was never implemented. Finally, the Russians signed treaties with China in 1894 and Britain in 1895. Central Asia was thereafter to be Divided Asia.

The Turkish, Turkic, Uyghur, Kazakh, and other peoples of Central Asia were caught in a vise between the great empires. Different in some respects was the experience of Algerian Berbers and Arabs far to the west at the other end of the Muslim world. What the two groups of peoples shared were the tactics used against them: the attempt to destroy their cultural heritage and the introduction of settlers. Also different was the response of the native peoples. Whereas the Central Asians were mainly victims, the Algerians were determined fighters. Their war was perhaps the most widely discussed and was certainly one of the bitterest of the conflicts between the North and the South. So now I turn to the saga of the Algerian fight for independence.

CHAPTER 28

The Algerian Revolution

In the nineteenth century, as I have described in Part 2, the great Algerian patriot, Abd al-Qadir, led a generation-long guerrilla war against the French invaders. Worn and broken, in 1846 he went into a relatively comfortable exile while those he had led were beaten down into servitude. Groups of *colons* (also known as the *pieds noirs*) from the North—mainly Spaniards, Italians, Alsatians, and Corsicans, with only about one in five being French—rushed in. They were not concerned with the aggrandizement of France; their aim was the acquisition of land. Like Ireland, Palestine, South Africa, and Russian Central Asia, Algeria was not so much an *imperial* as a *colonial* venture. Within a decade after the French invasion, Europeans made up about 1 percent of the population and were hurriedly taking over the land. Area by area the Algerian population was driven out of virtually all of the usable agricultural lands. The country became, at least economically, French.

As I have pointed out in Chapter 7, the colonists not only took away the land of the natives but also drove them down culturally. When the French invaded, a large portion of the Algerian population was literate in Arabic, with a satisfactory standard of living and a coherent cultural life shaped by Islam. But by 1847, as Alexis de Tocqueville told his colleagues in the French National Assembly, “we have rendered Muslim society much more miserable and much more barbaric than it was before it became acquainted with us.”[1]

Tocqueville was correct, and the condition of the Algerians got much worse. After a century of French rule, about three in four Algerians were illiterate even in Arabic, few had stable jobs, and almost none had well-paying employment. Bad health was chronic and many went to bed each night hungry. When I went to Algeria in 1962 in the last days of the Algerian-French war, I found that Algerians were so totally excluded from the *colon* economy that even mom-and-pop laundries and bakeries were European monopolies.

Although Algiers had France's largest medical school and hospital complex, fewer than half a dozen of its doctors were Algerian.

France organized Algeria both as a colony and as an integral part of France. It was divided into three provinces (*départements*) similar to those in metropolitan France, but they were governed even before the war by "security" rules that would not have been tolerated in France.

Until the end of the First World War, neither Arab nor Berber Algerians had found means to express themselves. They played no part in administering themselves and their voices were effectively silenced. Then, despite the bitter opposition of the *colons,* the National Assembly in Paris recognized their contribution to the war effort—173,000 Algerians had enlisted in the French army, and nearly one in six was killed—by moving slowly and haltingly toward a policy of making them, first culturally and then politically, French. After the cultural aspects of this policy were effected over the next twenty years, a French government offered citizenship to a select group whom it judged to have met its standards. Only 1 Algerian in 250 qualified.

Even this token concession outraged the *colons,* and they organized a lobby to overturn the legislation. The lobby's principal critic presciently warned his parliamentary colleagues that if the Algerians were not allowed to become members of the French nation, "beware lest they do not soon create one for themselves."[2] He was far in advance of his time and was virtually laughed out of the assembly. Meanwhile, having not been given national identity by France and not finding it in nationalism, Algerians sought refuge in Islam.

While both Arabs and Berbers were Muslims, their religious affiliations and heritage failed to bridge ethnic divisions, tribal schisms, or the cultural divide between villagers and the urban population. Nor did it give them sufficient strength, as Abd al-Qadir had already found a century before, to drive out the French. Like peasant farmers throughout Africa and Asia, Algerians regarded their villages, rather than Algeria, as their nation. It was their shared religious belief and their shared sense of humiliation that gave them such sense of unity as they had. All were despised by the Europeans, who regarded the elite as just imitation French people, the peasants as a species of farm animal, and the urban lower class as "street Arabs." For many years, all suffered in silence, but gradually they sought means of change.

The means of change grew slowly and chaotically. Three main Algerian groups came forward but failed to generate effective popular support. The first, founded in 1931 by Muslim clerics, who were influenced by similar revivalist movements in Egypt and Morocco, was the Gathering of the Algerian Community. Somewhat like the Sunni

Hamas in modern Palestine and the Shiah Hizbullah in modern Lebanon, the gathering drew strength from the social services it provided for the native population; however, it never managed to develop a political program.

The second major group was a party that called itself (notably using French rather than Arabic) the Union Démocratique du Manifeste Algérien. It was organized by the small urban elite of relatively prosperous, educated, and Europeanized Algerians just after the conclusion of the Second World War. The French view of Algeria was adopted by the union's leaders: to them, it was a backward society. The way forward, they proclaimed, was to put aside Algerian culture and evolve—hence they were known as the *évolués*—from current "backwardness" toward French culture and French citizenship. The évolués sought not independence from France but rather equality for Algerians within the French Union. Indeed, the man who was their recognized leader, Farhat Abbas, famously denied that there was such an entity as the Algerian nation.[3] Having served in the French army and being married to a Frenchwoman, he was effectively marginalized as the token Algerian. So were his followers.

The third group was the most radical. It was organized and led by an Algerian of humble origin, Messali Hadj, who had fought during the First World War in the French army and, like Farhat Abbas, had married a Frenchwoman. Although Messali had practically no formal education, Algerians found him a spell-binding public speaker.

Messali addressed the growing number of Algerians who performed menial labor in France. Hated but used by the French, they were underpaid, discriminated against, and angry. He offered them a means of expressing their anger in political association. The authorities saw this as sedition and put him in prison. Undeterred, when he was released he continued to speak out and over time became the visible symbol of Algeria. In 1937, he enlarged his association into the Algerian Progressive Party and set its objectives: to win independence from France and give back to Algerians the lands taken from their ancestors by the *colons*. To the French and particularly to the pieds noirs, he was the very embodiment of everything they hated and feared in Algerians. During the Second World War, the Vichy government condemned him to sixteen years of hard labor and banned his party.

Meanwhile, during the dreary years of the Second World War, when Algeria was under Vichy control, the Algerians listened avidly when Franklin D. Roosevelt and Winston Churchill made their grand pronouncements about freedom and independence. Always keen not to be overshadowed, Charles de Gaulle echoed their words in January 1944 when he cautiously and vaguely promised "to lead each

of the colonial peoples to a development that will permit them to administer themselves, and, later, to govern themselves." [4]

The Algerians, to their cost, believed Roosevelt and Churchill and heard what they wanted to hear in de Gaulle's statement. So, on the morning of May 8, 1945—VE-day—inhabitants of the little Algerian town of Sétif gathered to celebrate. They thought, naively to be sure, that the millennium had arrived. Joy got out of hand and celebration turned to riot as the participants waved the flag of their hero, the early resistance leader Abd al-Qadir. Particularly among the impoverished landless agricultural workers, the celebration released pent-up anger. Ugly but sporadic attacks on Europeans drew down on them the fury of the *colons.* Between ten thousand and forty-five thousand Algerians were massacred by private Frenchmen, the French police, and the French army. That tragedy may be taken as the seedbed of modern Algerian nationalism.

The French Communist Party, to which the Algerian radicals had looked for at least psychological support, dumped them just like its Moscow bosses were in the process of selling out the Greek resistance. Playing European politics, through which it wanted to influence the public against the creation of NATO, the Communist Party decided to demonstrate French patriotism by opposing moves toward Algerian independence. The Communist Party newspaper, *Humanité,* downplayed the Sétif massacre while its Algerian offshoot, *Liberté,* urged that the Algerians who had instigated the revolt be put in front of a firing squad.[5] For the next decade, the Algerian Communist Party sided with the *colons* and supported the sending of French soldiers to fight the Algerians.

The Sétif massacre and the Communist reaction to it caused Messali to break with the Communist-led front and to reconstitute his suppressed party as the Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties. It won the municipal elections of 1947 but was overwhelmed by fraud and intimidation in the crucial 1948 elections for the assembly. Following that defeat, Messali was again arrested, and this time he was deported. The net result of French repression was that a new generation of Algerians, many of whom had served in the French army during the Second World War, concluded that they could gain nothing at the ballot box and began to think in terms of bullets.

Thousands of Algerians were slaughtered during the May 1945 French massacre. The Algerian war for independence was one of the ugliest and bitterest conflicts between any people of the Muslim world and the imperial powers of the North.

Among the young veterans was Ahmad Ben Bella, who had won two of France's highest decorations for valor—one of which was awarded to him personally by de Gaulle. As a soldier, Ben Bella had fought in the Italian campaign; it was there that he first encountered and was deeply impressed by the Italian partisans, the anti-Fascist Resistenza Italiana. He carried his appreciation of their campaign with him back to Algeria. There, after his demobilization, he entered politics as a follower of Messali. He was successful in a local election but soon realized that he was blocked at that level. He could hope to go no higher. Frustrated and angry, he struck out on a track more radical than that followed by Messali: he gathered together a group of young men, many of them veterans like him, to fight for independence. Getting financial support, he realized, was crucial so he did what similar groups elsewhere had done: he organized a robbery. He was caught and sentenced to eight years' imprisonment and his organization, which by then had grown to nearly five thousand members, was broken up. Ben Bella managed to escape and went underground, just as he had seen the anti-Fascist Italians do.

Meanwhile, far from Algeria two things happened that would shape the Algerian struggle. First, the French army in Indochina was defeated at Dien Bien Phu. That great battle, which the French had proclaimed would be a knockout blow to the Viet Minh, cost some

thirteen thousand French lives. It was the first time that a French army had been defeated by a colonial people, and it had the same effect in Algeria that the defeat of General Edward Braddock's British army during the French and Indian War in 1763 had on the colonial Americans: as Benjamin Franklin had said of the British defeat then, it "gave us Americans the first suspicion that our exalted ideas of the prowess of British regulars had not been well founded." [6] Just as Braddock's defeat had helped convince Americans that they had a chance against the British army, the Viet Minh's triumph over the French was to convince Algerians that they could defeat the French.

The second result of the French defeat in Vietnam was that a group of French army officers, having been humiliated by the Germans in the Second World War and by the Viet Minh in Indochina, came to share an almost mystical quest to recapture French grandeur. From the Viet Minh they drew inspiration for a new form of counterinsurgency. Politically sensitive, utterly ruthless, and sharply targeted, French military counterinsurgency would be first played out in Algeria by the French elite paratroop regiments under General Jacques Massu.[7]

On November 1, 1954, the Algerians who felt most keenly their national destiny formed the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN; Association for National Liberation). It is ironic that the name of the independence movement was French. So completely had France wiped away the cultural heritage of Algeria that even the militants spoke French by preference. Years later, one of them, Houari Boumedienne, told President Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt that he was the only one in the Algerian cabinet who knew Arabic.[8] Despite, but also in part because of, the denationalization of Algeria and Algerians, the war of independence had begun.

This, the second, or twentieth-century, phase of the war for Algeria was started in the countryside by dispersed, poor, and ill-armed groups. Indeed, few Algerian would-be insurgents even had weapons. Among the widely scattered groups, they had fewer than four hundred firearms, of which about half were shotguns. (The quest for weapons was ever to be one of the determinants in their military operations.) Militarily, the insurgents were insignificant, as almost all guerrilla movements are in their infancy, but psychologically, they had profited from the defining moments of Sétif and Dien Bien Phu. Then, as each incident, each stirring demonstration, each infuriating humiliation, each vicious suppression piled on others, they slowly gathered strength. But their strength was never military. They were never able to stand up to the French army, which was massively armed by the United States and which outnumbered them about forty to one. Nor were they able, like Josip Broz Tito's Yugoslav Partisans or the Greek

National Liberation Front, to hold territory.

They had a few successes, but these were mainly psychological, as when their actions forced the Liberal leader Farhat Abbas to admit that he had been wrong to doubt Algerian nationhood. What was important was that they began to create what I have called the "climate of insurgency."[9] This transformation may be dated from an attack on the *colons* in the area around the town of Philippeville. Provoked by the demonstration, the French army joined with European civilians to carry out a massacre. French soldiers had orders to kill every Arab they met. They killed perhaps twelve thousand. After Philippeville, there was no middle ground. Nationalist Algerians were on one side and *colons* on the other.

In short, what up to 1954 had been essentially a terrorist campaign was being hammered *by the French* into a politico-military guerrilla war. At first the actions took place in the countryside. There it was a true guerrilla war. Particularly in the scrub and forest of the Kabyle, small groups of local men, just like the early nineteenth-century Spanish guerrillas, ambushed French troops whose heavy equipment confined them to the roads, seized what arms and supplies they could capture, and fled. The leaders of these attacks, two Kabyle Berbers, Ramdane Abane and Belkacem Krim, picked up the struggle against France from where Abd al-Qadir had left it a century before.[10]

Realizing that the small military actions were of value only because of their political impact, they sought to force the French into a counterinsurgency that would be ugly, repressive, and unsuccessful. To publicize French brutality—including the torture of Algerian prisoners of war—and their own limited but sometimes spectacular victories, the insurgents began to reach out to Algerians with a radio program called *Voix de l'Algérie* (Voice of Algeria) and even a newspaper called *El Moudjahid* (The warrior). As they were increasingly intent to have happen, their struggle was also beginning to get international recognition.

But the people on the ground in Algeria were being worn down. Many of the leaders had been killed. And those still alive were arguing over their strategy. They also were disgusted by the absence of the original leaders, notably Ben Bella, who was then living in Cairo as a guest of President Nasser. Relations reached such a vitriolic point in the spring of 1956 that the interior leader, Abane, wrote to Ben Bella, saying, "If you cannot do anything for us outside, come back and *die* with us. Come and fight. Otherwise consider yourselves as traitors!"[11] The movement seemed on the point of imploding.

To avoid this self-destruction, the in-house leaders decided that they must resolve their differences and plan their next moves. Even though it would be extremely dangerous to assemble—they would

attract attention, they might be denounced, and, if they were caught, the resistance would collapse—they decided they must take the risk. The least dangerous place was the Kabyle. It had two advantages: the French believed they had pacified it, and the rugged terrain offered some cover. They had no other option. They issued a call. Although he was summoned, Ben Bella missed the meeting.[12]

Led by Abane, the conferees worked from August 20, 1956, for about two weeks of intensive sessions to "regularize" the resistance. They decided that there could be no compromise and no negotiations before Algerian independence was assured. To carry forward the fight, they divided Algeria into six regions (*wilayahs*), each to be organized as though in a regular army but fought for by guerrillas. More important, they announced the formation of a national government, a seventeen-member congress they called Le Conseil National de la Révolution Algérienne. Still bitter over the role the Communists had played after the Sétif massacre, they banned Communist participation; and, while in principle they wanted to work with Messali's reconstituted movement, the Mouvement National Algérien, they decided they could not because it was the most effective rival for the financial support they desperately needed from the Algerians resident in France. In time, Messali and his followers became the FLN's most bitter rivals.

Then, having set out an organizational structure, Abane and his colleagues laid out a strategic plan. Its centerpiece was what came to be called the Battle of Algiers. After Sétif and Philippeville, the Battle of Algiers was to be the third great defining event of the Algerian war for independence.

Up to that point, the guerrilla war had been fought in the countryside. However, as Abane realized, to be politically effective it had to be fought where it would get worldwide attention. That had to be in the city of Algiers. But to fight in a city, Abane had to violate the fundamental law of insurgency: the requirement for mobility. He decided to take the gamble.

Abane followed the organizational structure that was used among the Young Turks, as I have described in Chapter 21 and will describe in Chapter 32 in relation to the Muslim Brothers: He organized his followers in cells. Each cell was composed of not more than half a dozen Algerians who were either closely related or neighbors. Theoretically at least only one of these men would be in contact with an individual who would be the link to another cell and to the command. Thus, the underground formed a sort of pyramid. In this manner, it was supposed that even if the organization lost a cell, the overall structure would remain secure. The pyramid was the classic model of a terrorist organization.

To accomplish his essentially political goal, Abane planned to use the Algiers underground mainly as a means of communication with the native population. These one hundred thousand Algerians had to proclaim to the world that Algeria was determined to be independent. Their proclamation would be a general strike of the Casbah. It was to begin on January 28, 1957.

The French governor-general Robert Lacoste understood exactly what the FLN aimed to accomplish. If Algeria was to be "saved," he decided, Algerians could not be allowed to demonstrate to the world that the FLN was their representative. He thought he had to act quickly because, knowing that the French government often vacillated, he was afraid they would miss their chance to cripple the resistance. So he ordered the commander of the French paratroopers to break the strike swiftly and regardless of the cost.

Lacoste's was a command that General Massu welcomed. Still stinging from the French defeats in the Second World War, Indochina, and the abortive Anglo-French-Israeli 1956 Suez war, he threw his paratroopers into the urban battle. They ripped the shutters off shops, drove young men they found on the streets into work stations, and even rounded up students and forced them back into schools. Then they began the real crackdown. Arresting men more or less indiscriminately, they began to apply torture, which the French had used for many years throughout North Africa, to extract information on the FLN underground. Cell by cell they broke into the pyramid and managed to trap and kill the operational chiefs one after another.[13] By the time they had finished, the urban underground was wiped out.

Militarily and tactically, the Battle of Algiers was a French victory. But, politically and strategically, the FLN won. The trauma of the battle, with its hideous record of torture and killing, revolted the French public. The events in France during 1962 would finally drive General de Gaulle to give up Algeria. Only de Gaulle among the French leaders was strong enough to make that painful decision. And it almost cost him his life.

Meanwhile, driven by the ruthless campaign against the internal army and the insurgents in Algiers, Ben Bella and his remaining colleagues had formed an external army in Tunisia. Eventually numbering 150,000 men, the army and its dependents were sealed off from Algeria in 1957 by a barrier known as the Maurice Line. It copied the Berlin Wall and the barrier the Italians had built to pen in and starve the Sanusis in Libya. More elaborate than either, it employed minefields, electrified wire emplacements, and sophisticated radar warning systems along the whole length of the Tunisian-Algerian frontier. Ironically, it made Ben Bella's army safe. Safe beyond the barrier, the external army suffered no casualties and could

be armed and trained securely and peacefully. So, when the French finally agreed to Algerian independence in the Evian Accords on March 17, 1962, the external FLN was in position to dominate the relatively tiny and scattered groups of internal guerrillas. They could do so not only by virtue of their military strength but also because the Algerian public felt that the aim they had struggled to achieve in nearly eight years of suffering had been accomplished—the French were leaving—and they were tired. In Algeria the guerrillas had become superfluous.

The cost of the war was horrific and in some ways is still being paid. During the eight years of fighting, at least half a million Algerians—about one in sixteen natives—and about twenty-five thousand French troops were killed in combat. Tens of thousands of Algerians had been locked away in concentration camps.[14] When France agreed to leave, about 1,200,000 Europeans fled or were driven out of the country, along with about 200,000 Algerian "loyalists" (*harkis*).[15]

Algeria is one of the few places where the nationalism of the South has been successfully used to drive out the forces of the North. But the costs have been high. Bitter combat, torture, and clandestine warfare are not good schools in civic virtues. Not surprisingly, Algeria has not found a means to convert the nationalism that was born in the war into open, just, and secure nationhood in the peace that followed. Algeria remains a wounded society, so far unable to gain a sense of civic balance.

CHAPTER 29

Nasser and Arabiyah

When the Second World War began, Egypt was ordered by its British rulers to break diplomatic relations with the Axis, but, in an unpublicized gesture of independence, it did not declare war. The British paid no attention to the gesture and turned the country into an armed camp, a warehouse, and workshop for their army. For Britain, Egypt itself was unimportant, but the Suez Canal that cut through its territory was of supreme importance. It was the link between the Far East and England. Through it came raw materials, foodstuffs, and the manpower of India. That was also why the Italians and the Germans were attacking. So the Egyptians were not allowed to raise a whisper about their own desires or fears. Nationalism was put on hold.

When Egypt's king Farouk, never a brave man and one totally devoted to his table and his bed, made a feeble attempt to assert his role as ruler of the country by trying to choose his prime minister, the British slapped him down. In February 1942, British tanks rumbled into Cairo and surrounded his palace while the British ambassador told him that Britain would depose him if he did not pick the man they wanted to administer the government. Ironically, the man they wanted was the current leader of the relic of the party that had so disturbed them in 1919, the Wafd.

At the ministerial level, relations between Egyptians and the British were polite and sometimes even intimate. But below that level, they were always crude and often acrimonious. Occupations by armies are everywhere difficult for native populations, and British soldiers, like soldiers everywhere, were not given to polite talk. They sneered at the "dirty gypos" and taunted them as wogs, just as American soldiers would taunt other peoples with a variety of epithets: Filipinos were "niggers"; Frenchmen, "frogs"; Latin Americans, "geezers"; Vietnamese, "gooks"; and Iraqis, "ragheads."[1] Rudyard Kipling set the style: natives of the South of the world were, to him, "half-devil and half-child." British soldiers enjoyed singing the Egyptian national

anthem with the words altered into a smutty joke on the king and queen. And, to assist the soldiers in communicating, they were taught basic Arabic vocabulary with such useful expressions as “get out” (*imshi*) and “beat it” (*yalla*). Thus, the North verbalized its disdain for the South, and the South reacted in the only way it could, with silent anger.

Copying the practice of the British in India, the British in Egypt built themselves a sporting club on the island in the middle of the Nile. And, as in India, they restricted its membership to the English. The king of the country was not allowed in, nor were distinguished Egyptian political figures, scholars, or businessmen.[2] To Egyptians the greatest victory of President Gamal Abdel Nasser years later was, at least emotionally, not so much the nationalization of the Suez Canal or the European banks but the Egyptianization of the British club. The Indians and other colonial people understood; to foreign journalists the Egyptian attitude seemed childish.

The institution on which nationalists usually focus is the army. It has capacities rare in other segments of society: the ability to move, to communicate, to project force, and to coordinate. It wears uniforms, displays flags, and projects the aura of patriotism. But the Egyptian army was different. It was the butt of jokes. It was laughingly described by the British as the largest army in the world—measured, that is, by the girth of its officers: “And here the Egyptian Army stands forth as the premier military force of modern times . . . seniority is entirely by weight . . . [officers] are equipped with wooden chairs to enable them to mount their horses.”[3]

Disdain became more physical in the distribution of food. Since the days of the Roman Empire, Egypt was Europe’s “farm,” but Egyptians themselves had rarely gone hungry. Under British control, they did. When European observers investigated the Egyptian economy at the end of the Second World War, they were shocked to find that Greece, just emerging from the exploitive and brutal Nazi occupation, could more easily feed Egypt than Egypt, which had spent the war under British control, could help Greece. As we have seen in India, imperialism could be measured on a scale of poverty. The long-term and common plight of the Egyptian poor, like that of the Indian peasantry, was measured in terms of starvation. As the English economist Doreen Warriner, who was sent out by the British government to investigate the economy, wrote, “The conditions of his [the Egyptian peasant’s] life are of unrelieved horror. . . . There is no standard of living; anything lower would be death.” [4]

Why was this true? Warriner answered that, under British rule, 97 percent of the farmers together owned the same amount of land as the upper one-quarter to one-half of 1 percent of the landlords. Rulers

had allowed or promoted this distribution of assets, and they had not been challenged by the British, who relied on them as supporters of the British connection. Then too, as in India, British wartime needs were given priority over the hunger of natives so both India, where several million people starved, and Egypt were drained of their food production.

It was this Egypt, British Egypt, into which Nasser was born in 1918. Nasser's father was a postal worker. His family was what is known in America as "lower middle class." Having almost no assets and a meager salary, they struggled to keep from slipping lower on the social scale. As Nasser later told me, the quest for dignity was a major theme in his life.[5]

As a young man, Nasser participated in student demonstrations and so acquired a police record. This initially prevented him from entering the army academy. His record was not the only problem. Since the role of the army was to help create stability and prevent threats to the ruling regime, entry into the academy was restricted to the ruling class. With the bemused help of a senior official, who was surprised that a young man who was without social connections would try to break into the officer class, in 1937 he became the first member of the lower social order to be admitted. Once in, his military education lasted only a year. As with education in general and the military in particular, the British and the puppet regime they installed did not want a highly trained Egyptian officer corps. Nasser did not learn much in the academy, but during his year in officer training he met some of the men who would later join him in overthrowing the monarchy. Over the next few years after graduation, he was posted to various Egyptian garrisons where he met the angry young men who would become his followers as the Free Officers. But it was his service in the 1948 war in Palestine that brought all of his experiences together.

During the Palestine campaign the shoddiness of the Egyptian army's equipment, the lack of support by the royal government, and the failure of the various Arab forces even to communicate with one another convinced him that first Egypt and then all the Arabs must change. When his unit returned to an enthusiastic public welcome, which the government tried to prevent, Nasser was assured that the Egyptian nation agreed with him and his colleagues. And when he was briefly posted to participate in the armistice negotiations in Rhodes in February 1949, he became convinced that the Northern powers, Britain and the United States, were unfairly supporting Israel. Like most other Arabs, he would come to believe that Israel was politically and economically a part of the North, even though it was physically situated in the South.

During this time, many Arabs, both Muslims and Christians, agreed with the Syrian Greek Orthodox philosopher, educator, and ambassador Costa Zurayq that the meaning of their disastrous defeat in the Palestine war was the disunion and corruption of the Arab states and their rulers.[6] Zurayq's critique was also put forward by a Palestinian educator and official in the British mandate government, Musa Alami, when he wrote,

> In the face of the enemy, the Arabs were not a state, but petty states; groups, not a nation. . . . [Unity is necessary, but] not enough. The inefficiency of the present regimes is also responsible for the disaster. . . . There must be a strong universal system of education with the object of creating a new, powerful, conscious generation capable of defending the Arab homeland and of recovering its self-respect. There must also be a complete program for the exploitation of Arab sources of wealth, so that a powerful defensive system may be created to preserve the country, to raise its standard of living, and to revive its people.[7]

Nasser was hearing similar messages everywhere he turned. They would form a sort of précis for his programs to come.

Meanwhile, in Syria there was a coup d'état, one of many, that apparently encouraged Nasser and his colleagues to believe that taking power was feasible. It also alerted the security services and frightened the prime minister. He called in Nasser and said that he had heard that some of his colleagues had been heard talking of a coup. Nasser of course denied the story. Unlike Mustafa Kemal in the Ottoman Empire, he had no one to guide him and no personal experience, but he realized that delay could be fatal.[8] However, his group was not ready to move. They were then only about fourteen men, and they came from very different backgrounds. Some were not fellow army officers.[9] At least one was a Communist and one was a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. On tactics and even on basic issues, they profoundly disagreed with one another. Keeping them together, let alone getting them to act together, was a remarkable feat. Nasser managed it until after the coup succeeded; then he broke with most of the original group. Even while they were working together, they lacked the weight they needed to sway the rest of the officer corps. He realized that he needed a more senior man to act as nominal leader. Nasser finally picked Major General Muhammad Naguib, who had also fought in Palestine, was known to be a patriot, and was popular among the army. Together, they staged the coup d'état of July 23, 1952.

When Nasser seized power, he had the bold ambition of making Egypt into a modern, respectable, and militarily capable nation but few ideas on how to accomplish his goal. From my discussions with him and the observations of others, I believe he came slowly to a four-

part program.[10]

First, he never intended to share political power. This was already evident before he began to organize the coup. He put General Naguib at the front when he needed him but pushed him and the members of his own team aside when he no longer needed them and when he disagreed with them. He thought that his closest colleague and brother-in-law, Abd al-Hakim Amr, after whom he named his son, had misled him into war with Israel in 1963, so he ousted him. Anwar Sadat he openly despised. While Nasser initially courted the Muslim Brotherhood, which I will describe in Chapter 32, he soon found it an obstacle rather than a help to his revolutionary program. On their side, the Muslim Brothers found his secularism abhorrent. A member of the movement tried to kill him, and, in response, he outlawed it, jailing many of its members and executing some of its leaders. Undeterred, he moved ahead on his programs.

Second, I think he developed his efforts in nation building, his revolutionary social program, step by step as he realized Egypt's weaknesses rather than ideologically or as a result of study. He focused on the army because he saw his and Egypt's greatest danger to be war with Israel. And he realized that the army would remain weak, no matter how well armed, so long as the Egyptian population was uneducated.

Education had never been a priority in British-ruled Egypt. Not until 1925 did the state open significant numbers of even half-day public elementary schools. As late as 1945, only a million Egyptians, less than half of the eligible group, attended school, and almost none of them had access to scientific education or technical training. By the end of Nasser's tenure in 1970, however, nearly seven million Egyptians were in schools and universities and 100,000 had already graduated in the natural sciences, while 120,000 were being trained in vocational schools.

In addition to establishing schools and universities, and in some ways more fruitfully, Nasser restructured military service. He made the army into a workshop to produce what I have called "new men." This is such a critical departure from the imperial past that I need to dilate on it.

Under British rule, the mass of the Egyptian people were farmers (*fallahs,* often written "fellaheen"). As I have pointed out, studies by English economists showed that they lived in abject poverty. To feed themselves, they had to plow their fields, and in order to do that, they had to wade in the waters of the Nile. Almost universally, they contracted the worm disease produced in those waters. The disease did not kill, but it debilitated. Victims became lethargic, given to aches and exhaustion. But practically no farmers knew what caused

their misery. Ignorance was certainly not bliss, but it enabled them to keep on wading in the Nile to tend their crops.

No one knew any feasible way to overcome the disease.[11] Nasser knew little about the disease, but he understood its effects. And, in part, he used his army to at least mitigate them. By the middle of his presidency in 1965, 130,000 Egyptians had returned from the army to civilian life in better health, but at a social and economic cost. They could not return to their villages to farm. When one learns what bilharzia is and what it does to the human body, as every young soldier learned during military service, he no longer dared to be a farmer on the Nile. That was revolutionary.

Also revolutionary was that the demobilized soldiers had acquired skills that set them apart from village life. Having learned how to drive a truck or acquired other mechanical skills, they had no opportunities in village life. So, person by person, Nasser's emphasis on the army was pushing the Egyptians out of their traditional ways into modern life in the cities.

My studies have shown that Nasser's various programs collectively created a new society, virtually a new Egyptian nation, parallel to the traditional society. This is such a critical departure from thinking about the nation and nationalism, it is still so little appreciated, and it had such a dramatic impact throughout the Muslim world that it needs to be understood. This is the third aspect of the policy that emerged under his rule. I summarize it here.

In the generations of Egyptians who had grown up before the 1952 coup, virtually the entire society was "traditional." That is to say, most Egyptians were peasant farmers living in villages. They worked with their hands and with the help of animals but had neither mechanical nor power-driven tools. They went to religious schools that conditioned them to Islamic belief and practice rather than teaching them skills or even hygiene. Their standard of living was low; their death rate was one of the highest in the world; one in four of their children died before the age of five; they were beset by various fly-borne and water-carried diseases and malaria, which, when not immediately lethal, sapped their energy and strength; they had little access to safe water and were unable to dispose of their waste; but they grew rapidly in numbers.[12] As workers, they produced Egypt's cotton.

The urban lower class was slightly better off in access to clean water but worse off in access to food. As a whole, they were consumers rather than producers. Craftsmen, such as carpenters and masons, also worked with their hands without power tools. They lived in conditions that Charles Dickens and Henry Mayhew had seen in London's slums a century or so earlier.

There was a small Egyptian middle class, perhaps 6 percent of the population, but most of the functions we would ascribe to a middle class were performed by resident foreigners, mainly Greeks and Italians. An even smaller upper class was made up of landowners, merchants, and government officials. Roughly 2.5 percent of the proprietors owned as much land as the other 97.5 percent put together. An even smaller group, about half of 1 percent, owned the biggest share of the total economy and such industry, mainly textiles, as existed. Egypt was the home of a highly cultured, sophisticated, wealthy aristocracy that lived the good life and partook of the best of European education, literature, and the arts. But they did not carry their Europeanization into activities that benefited either the mass of Egyptian society or the economy of the nation.

Nasser was determined to change all of this. He wanted to bring Egypt into the twentieth century.

By 1965, just over a decade into the new regime, his programs had created a modernizing society parallel to but separate from the traditional society. In it, a new upper class, mainly former officers, had grown to about 0.5 percent of the total population; a modernizing middle class, to roughly 1 percent; and a new lower class, mainly former soldiers, that worked with modern tools and techniques, to 2 percent to 3 percent. They were Nasser's constituency, the people propelling modernization. The task Nasser took on was to draw more and more people from the traditional society into their ranks.

He tried to do this in a number of ways. One much-publicized program was Liberation Province. A statement on the way that traditional peasants were "converted" into cadres of the new nation was thus set out by the head of the Social Affairs Department:

> Settlers are selected scientifically on social, medical, psychological tests. As social qualification, applicants must possess [only] one wife, no dependents except children, and no property; they must have been married only once and must have finished their military service. Of 1,100 applicants so far, all have the right social qualifications, but only 382 families were accepted medically, because while most of the men were healthy enough, the women and children fell far short of the standard. Only 180 families survived the psychological test. . . . Of these, 132 are now undergoing a six-month training, which included a three-month probation period. We must consider both people and land to be under reclamation.[13]

The "new Egyptian" of Liberation Province was to be marked off from the fallah villager by wearing a new uniform in place of the *gallabiah* gown worn by peasants, by eating a richer diet, and by earning a salary four times the average of the traditional peasant. The children of the settlers were to go to boarding schools (an idea copied from the Israeli *kibutzim*) to be sure that whatever remained of their

parents' background did not infect them. And light industry was to be encouraged in the province so that alternative modern employment would be available. It was a grand project of social engineering, but, as planned, it largely failed.

Although in Liberation Province little actually worked to plan, when considered more generally in Egyptian society, its intent was at least partially self-fulfilling. That was because, while unemployment and underemployment were common in the Egyptian economy, in selected modernizing categories, there were not enough workers. Consequently, they earned more. A mechanic, for example, earned three times as much as a traditional artisan and even more than an unskilled laborer. The mechanic was assured of steady employment so that his relative income would be even higher. The traditional artisan and the laborer thus had strong incentives to learn new skills and shift to mechanical tools.

What caused a setback to all efforts at domestic—"one country" (wataniyah)—programs was the fourth of Nasser's commitments, to Pan-Arabism (*Arabiyah*).

From the beginning or at least from his involvement in the Palestine campaign, Nasser believed that only if there were unity among Arabs could they protect themselves from imperialism. Egypt was too small to stand alone. History proved that. Napoleon easily conquered it; when Mehmet Ali Pasha tried to build Egyptian military and industrial capacity, the North forced him to dismantle both his army and his nascent industry; the British overthrew the nationalist forces of the Egyptian army commander Ahmad Arabi in 1882, and, overtly or covertly, they then ruled Egypt for the next seventy-five years. An "Egypt first"—wataniyah—policy did not work. Egypt alone could not defend itself. This Nasser firmly believed.

What he perceived to be lacking was Arab unity. Only if the Arabs could put aside or overcome their differences did they have a chance of getting and keeping independence. Only together could the petty Arab states that had lost the war in Palestine acquire sufficient weight to defend themselves against the North. This was the painful lesson he learned in the repeated conflicts with Israel and its Northern supporters (France, Britain, and America). So the fourth aspect of his policy required a shift in concentration from Egypt to the wider field of the Arab world.[14] This involved a shift in the ideology of nationalism from a focus on the nation-state, wataniyah, to a wider notion, what came to be termed "folk nationalism," qawmiyah.

Nasser argued that it was the Western-inspired state system, controlled by puppet kings and corrupt presidents who were manipulated by the imperialists, that was the source of weakness. They were constantly expressing their dedication, their boldness, and

their unity, but what they were saying was just a charade. The League of Arab States that was created to coordinate their activities was actually the institutionalization of their disunity. It was the forum in which the separate states could ventilate their disagreements. As a correspondent for the *Economist* wrote of their October 1955 meeting, shortly after Nasser's coup, "Arab unity does not exist. . . . The Arab League revealed from the outset this historical condition of the Arabs, their persistent inability to unite politically but their abiding belief that union is a natural condition of their peoples which only required political formulation."[15] That formulation, Nasser argued, which was a necessary first step toward unity, could be provided by Arabiyah.

It was in pursuit of Arabiyah that Nasser suffered his greatest failures. These began immediately after the coup when the new government tried to get the Sudanese to make real the fiction of the "Anglo-Egyptian Sudan." The Sudanese wanted to drop "Egyptian" right after they dropped "Anglo." They insisted on being a watan rather than being a part of the qawm. That failure caused no great loss in prestige for the new government. Ironically, the next and most dangerous loss was in Egypt's apparent victory in the Anglo-French-Israeli attack on Egypt in 1956.

Rebuffing the attack made Nasser the hero of the whole Arab world and much of the rest of the Third World. It was, on the surface, as resounding a victory of the South over the North as the Japanese defeat of the Russians fifty years before. Unfortunately for Nasser, Egypt's victory was not due, as Japan's was, to its fleet or army. It was really President Dwight D. Eisenhower, not Nasser, who won the war for Egypt. Of course, no one in Egypt could admit that. So, pushed by his own beliefs, urged on by his military, and drawing a false lesson from the Suez war, he prepared to assert Egypt's new sense of purpose. The war created a "persona" that trapped Nasser into a line of policy that would prove a disaster for him and for Egypt. He came to espouse causes that he could not afford and for which neither his society nor his neighbors were prepared. The cause he had adopted had outrun the social, political, bureaucratic, and economic realities. In my talks with him, I got the impression he understood this, but he felt that he had no choice but to act on what he had said. Thus, he allowed himself to be lured into a series of moves that began with the attempt to join Egypt with Syria to form the United Arab Republic.

The United Arab Republic was to be the center of a truly unified Arab nation. Other Arab states were invited to join. But, rather than joining, the royal regimes of Iraq and Jordan created their own alliance, which they named the Arab Union, under the flag of the 1918 Revolt in the Desert. What had begun as a statement of unity was drowned out by strident calls for disunity.

And disunity also soon tore up the United Arab Republic. A proclamation of union could not contain the centrifugal forces. Egypt and Syria were too dissimilar in economic, social, political, and cultural affairs. These differences were magnified by the personal ambitions of the Syrians and the insensitivity of the Egyptians. On September 28, 1961, a junta of army officers revolted, proclaimed a new government for the separate state, and ordered the Egyptians to leave.

The most disastrous result of Nasser's reputation as the embodiment of Arabiyah was his involvement in Yemen. Immediately after the death of Imam Ahmad ibn Yahya, an army officer seized power from the imam's son, Muhammad al-Badr. The officer, Abdullah al-Sallal, then declared Yemen a republic and petitioned President Nasser to protect it. Essentially, he told Nasser that the coup had been staged in his name to carry out his grand scheme of Arab unity. As Nasser admitted to me, he could not refuse. But the coup was not fully successful. Muhammad al-Badr escaped to Saudi Arabia, where he asked the Saudi king to help him to restore his throne. The king agreed. So a Republican-Royalist, Saudi-Egyptian war began. Egypt rushed in the best units of its army and air force, a force that eventually reached seventy thousand soldiers, while Saudi Arabia, British mercenaries, the Israeli intelligence organization (the Mossad), and the CIA provided aid to tribesmen who at least temporarily became Royalist guerrillas.

Yemen became Egypt's "Vietnam," forcing a halt to Nasser's ambitious plan to remake the Egyptian nation.[16] It also effectively emasculated the Egyptian army. Thus, when the confrontation with Israel came to a head four years later over the rights of passage through the Straits of Tiran, Egypt's army was caught, as one of Nasser's aides said to me, "with its pants down."[17] The Israelis inflicted a humiliating defeat on the Egyptians.

In addition to the loss of territory, about twenty-five thousand able-bodied, disciplined, relatively well-trained men—about 5 percent of the "products" of Nasser's social programs—were killed. In comparison to the United States, that would amount to the loss of about five million men. Then there was the loss of territory, not only in Egypt but also in Syria and Jordan. Finally, the very concept of Arabiyah was discredited. The Arab defeat was a demonstration of the fact that Israel was a modern state and was supported financially and militarily by the United States, that is, it had become essentially a part of the North, while the Muslim Arab states were underdeveloped Southern states. That was clear to everyone, but what was crucial was that a growing number of Egyptians and other Arabs ceased to believe that Arab nationalism was capable of uniting the Arab states or

sufficiently energizing the Arab people to give them the strength and dignity they sought.

One who did not draw this conclusion was a young Libyan army officer of tribal background, Muammar al-Qaddafi. In September 1969, with about seventy of his fellow officers, he staged a coup d'état against the royal government that the Allies had imposed on Libya at the end of the Second World War. He was even less prepared that Nasser had been. He had no program, he knew almost nothing about the Libyan economy or government, and, indeed, as a very junior officer, he knew little about the Libyan army. But he had listened to Nasser's speeches and had seized on Nasser's fundamental idea, the need for unity. So, to Nasser's astonishment, Qaddafi rushed to meet him with a proposal—he would turn Libya over to him. Together, Egypt and Libya would form a real United Arab Republic.

Perhaps if Nasser had not been chastened by the Syrian debacle and the Yemen war—that is, if the Libyan coup had been mounted a decade earlier—he would have jumped at the chance. But he was older and more cautious. He told Qaddafi to get his own house in order first. Perhaps his advice was the beginning of wisdom, but, had he taken up the offer and managed to do with Libya what he had failed to do in Syria, he could have effected his social revolution with the vast wealth of Libyan oil. Certainly Egypt, and perhaps the whole Middle East, would now be a very different place.

What happened was very different. The quest for unity proved a source of disunity; the demand for dignity produced humiliation; the assertion of Arabiyah against Israel resulted in defeat. Nasser had been right in his analysis: Egypt alone was not strong and it was also poor and backward. But he did not act on his own analysis: when, in 1967, he challenged Israel, Egypt suffered a humiliating defeat.

Finally, after three years of pointless conflict along the Suez Canal, both Israeli prime minister Golda Meir and Nasser were ready to agree to an armistice.[18] Shortly after it was signaled, President Nasser died. To some extent, Arab nationalism died with him. Excitement about and then disillusionment with nationalism would be repeated in Iraq and Libya. Unlike Egypt, Algeria, and Afghanistan, they were rich countries. Like most of the regimes that emerged from under imperialism and colonialism, they were tyrannical. They lacked the compensating or balancing institutions of civic life that had grown in Europe and America over the centuries. There were too new, their rulers were too greedy for power and glory, and their people were unaccustomed to control over their own destiny. But, despite these failings, at least the rulers of Libya and Iraq, unattractive as they were, used their new wealth for programs of social welfare. As we shall see, it was not so much their internal policies or the ugly features

of their regimes that led to their destruction as it was the challenge they posed to the North.

CHAPTER 30

Saddam Husain and Iraq

Saddam Husain was one of the last of the pan-Arab social-nationalist leaders. His regime was politically regressive but socially progressive. The first part of that statement could have been made about most of the world's regimes—true democracies are an endangered species almost everywhere—but what was unusual were the social, educational, and public health aspects of the regime. To clarify this apparent anomaly one must examine the major influences on the life of the man who created and personified the regime, Saddam Husain.

Like many Iraqis and Syrians, Saddam found his first guide to Arab nationalism in the movement known as the Awakening (*al-Baath*). The ideologue of Baathism Michel Aflaq was a Greek Orthodox Christian Syrian. After a period of study in Paris at the Sorbonne, where he met his future collaborator Salah al-Din al-Bitar, Aflaq returned to Syria in 1932. Once there, he threw himself into political activism. Like a number of anti-imperialists, he started his political career as a Communist, but he broke with the Russian-dominated Communist Party, just as the Algerian nationalist Messali Hadj did, when, in one of its many convolutions, it announced its approval of French imperialism. (Neither man appeared to know anything about Russian imperialism.) Then, together with Bitar, Aflaq founded what became the Baath movement.

The idea of the Baath was essentially that held by many Arabs and other peoples of the South: that the Arabs had been forcibly divided and suppressed by imperialists. The Baath focused on the Arabic-speaking population of the Levant hinterland, Lebanon, Syria, and Iraq, but the general philosophy was regarded by adherents from Morocco to Indonesia to apply to their situations as well. Virtually everywhere, they agreed that they must expel the imperialists and their puppets. Where the Baathists went further was in their contention that in order to do so they must unify. Since they did not

agree on religion and felt little empathy for Berbers, Turks, Iranians, Pakistanis, Kashmiris, or Malays, they focused on the Arabs. Baathism, like Türkizm, was essentially a form of ethnic nationalism.

The dilemma in which the Baath was caught was that while many common people and students among their chosen group, the Arabs, accepted its philosophy, most of those whom it needed to enroll to become effective, the existing ruling circles, regarded it as subversive. The conservative Arab rulers, of course, had personal as well as policy reasons to oppose the Baath, but even President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who certainly agreed with its emphasis on Arab unity, regarded it as a rival. He forced Aflaq in 1958 to disband the Arab Socialist Baath Party when he formed the United Arab Republic. And in Syria, after the 1966 coup, which was proclaimed in the name of reform, the new government attacked the resurrected Baath Party and caused Aflaq, Bitar, and their colleagues to flee for their lives.[1]

Authoritarian, somewhat mystical, vaguely socialist, but determinedly committed to Arab unity, the Baath was introduced into Iraq by a young Iraqi engineer by the name of Fuad al-Rikabi.[2] Unlike other parties of the time, it drew on a wide range of Iraqis—army officers, civil servants, and educated professional men and women—and focused not only on Arab unity but also on the gross social iniquities that typified the period of direct British rule and the era of the British-guided semi-independent state. Weighed on the scales of Iraqi politics of the time, it was an immediate success. But initially, it was a covert success. To survive, it had to work—as the young Turkish officers had done under the late Ottoman Empire—undercover.

To the younger Iraqi army officers who had survived the frequent purges that weeded out the more outspoken supporters of radical Arab nationalism, Britain's ally Prime Minister Nuri al-Said was a traitor. They judged Nuri and his government in the same terms as revolutionary Americans in 1775 had judged those of their fellow colonists who supported Britain: they were antinationalists, turncoats, loyalists to the imperial power. The government of Nuri so distrusted its own army that it prevented the soldiers from having ammunition for their guns. Its security police treated the officer corps as a subversive force. They were right, but their actions were self-fulfilling: the more the officers were distrusted, the more they hated the rulers. They made several attempts to overthrow the government, but all failed until 1958. Then, almost by a fluke, one succeeded. It succeeded because two battalions that were being sent to Jordan to protect it against an anticipated Israeli attack had been allowed to acquire ammunition. As they passed through Baghdad, they struck against the king, the regent, and the prime minister, each of whom they regarded as a British puppet. The three men and their guards were killed and

the government collapsed. Almost to a person, the whole population rejoiced. Everyone was astonished at how easy it had been.

The two leaders of the coup, Abd al-Karim Qasim and Abd al-Salam Arif, were thought to be nationalists. Though they were unknown to the civilian nationalists, the civilians rallied to help them establish a government that was inspired by Nasser's Egypt. For all the nationalists, the hero was Egypt's president Nasser. As the Baathists told me, they admired him because he had actually put into practice the ideas that most Arabs just discussed. In the first flush of excitement, everyone assumed that Iraq would immediately join the United Arab Republic.

But, in the months following the coup, Qasim got rid of Arif and discovered the sweet taste of power. He found the attractions of single-state nationalism (wataniyah) too attractive to relinquish. He was flattered and flattered himself in a pervasive propaganda campaign as Iraq's "sole leader." Despite the "revolution," as the coup was renamed, much of the substance of the old regime lingered on and its symbols—renamed, to be sure—remained firmly in place. Qasim easily slid into the role of the former rulers. The photo of the king, which had been on every wall, was replaced by a photo of Qasim. George Orwell's Big Brother remained in Baghdad. Thus, while he continued to talk about Arab unity, Qasim found that running Iraq was easiest the way Nuri had done it. One after another he dropped the civilian nationalists.[3] He had tasted the apple of power and was no longer, if he ever had been, willing to share it with Nasser or anyone else.

In the aftermath of an uprising in Mosul, he accelerated his purge of the civilian Pan-Arabists and this time extended it to army officers. So, having adopted a personality cult, turned away from pan-Arab nationalism, and broken with most of his army supporters, he had set himself as a target for the Baathists. The finger on the trigger belonged to Saddam.

In the beginning of his involvement in the Baath movement, Saddam was a foot soldier. There is no indication that he studied its writings, but he liked the action it provided in the street. There it was bloodily contested by other groups and particularly by street gangs paid by the government to harass pan-Arab agitators. Saddam got a reputation as a "heavy." He soon turned from the street to the palace. Whether acting on his own or on orders from the party, he tried to kill Qasim.

He failed. He fired a machine-gun burst into Qasim's body but it did not kill him. As Qasim later delightedly showed me his bloodstained uniform in a glass case in his office, he said, "They were not professionals, not serious. You always fire a second burst. They

didn't. Too bad for them." Saddam never made that mistake again. But Qasim also learned a lesson. He came to distrust everyone and particularly his colleagues.

Seeing that they were more loyal to nationalism than to him, Qasim turned to the small group of Iraqis who had become or at least considered themselves to be Communists. Their pronouncements convinced British and American intelligence officers, prone as they always were to see Communists everywhere they looked, that Qasim had become a Soviet agent. It was probably at this time that America and Britain also joined in plots against him. If so, they had eager Iraqi collaborators. Those of his former colleagues who had not been exiled, imprisoned, or shot thought he had betrayed Arab nationalism.

Qasim inadvertently helped them. His every act created new enemies. By 1961, he had sent the army to crush the Kurds in the north; he nearly provoked a war with Iran by claiming Khuzistan, which was an Iranian province, though its population was mainly Arabic speaking; and, by resurrecting the claim on "that part of the Iraqi province of Basra known as Kuwait" (as he alluded to Kuwait in frequent speeches), he infuriated those Arab rulers who had supped at Kuwait's lavish banquet. Even President Nasser, that great proponent of Arab unity, sent troops to Kuwait to prevent Iraq from "unifying" it.

Ironically, in each of these misadventures, Saddam would later follow him.

The immediate result of Qasim's activities was that the Baath Party began to earn its name: it "awakened" or resurrected itself. Newly energized officers established cells in the army and got ready to overthrow Qasim's regime. On February 8, 1963, allegedly with assistance from the CIA, Baathists cornered Qasim in his office at the War Ministry and shot him. Then they brought Qasim's former colleague, the nationalist army officer Arif, from a prison cell, where Qasim had put him, into the presidency.

Almost immediately, the new regime began to split apart. The main issue was the kind of nationalism Iraq should pursue. Arif wanted an immediate merger with Egypt as Pan-Arabism demanded. But the Baathists had come to dislike Nasser's authoritarianism and had become disillusioned with Pan-Arabism. Their experiences had pushed them back toward the very way of thinking they had earlier blamed for many of the ills of the Arabs, single-state nationalism, wataniyah.

Arguing over the exact meaning of nationalism was a wasting game, and, playing it, the Baathists lost support. Then, after a period of drift, the Baath managed to get a toehold on the ladder of Iraqi political power in 1968. In this new regime, Saddam played only a minor role. He was careful to appear uncontroversial, merely a helper to the leaders, but he moved steadily to acquire the elements of real

power while avoiding a show of apparent power. Endowed with a phenomenal memory, he set out to learn what motivated Iraqis. In effect he adopted the role Joseph Stalin had famously ascribed to Vyacheslav Molotov during the struggle for power in the Soviet Union: he became "the best file clerk" in the country. He assembled information on everyone who could aid or thwart him. Gradually he built a party within the Baath Party. It took him a decade, but when he was ready, he more or less gently pushed aside the titular party leader, the man he called his political "father," General Hassan al-Bakr.

Getting rid of his patron was only the first step. He had learned that politics was no game and there were no rules. The only issue was winning. Regarding himself as the nation incarnate, he looked on disloyalty or difference as mortal threats. Everyone was suspect. Everyone was either a real or a potential enemy. So he moved to isolate, defeat, expel, or kill friends and colleagues when he thought they had become unreliable.[4] Beyond his intimate circle, he moved on a grand scale against whole groups. They, indeed, formed the majority of the Iraqis. He regarded the Shiis as "un-Iraqi," a people whose language, religion, and customs made them foreigners. Almost as bad were the Kurds: even though they shared Sunnah Islam, they spoke a foreign language, were non-Arabs, and were always assumed to be on the edge of revolt. The Kurds and the Shiis were natural enemies, but Saddam's list did not stop with them. He saw actual or potential enemies everywhere. Unknowingly he was duplicating on the Iraqi stage the paranoia the great imperialists had shown half a century before on Pan-Islam.

But, as he consolidated his power in Iraq, Saddam undertook a remarkable program of social welfare. Essentially, he carried forward the domestic policy Nasser had adopted with an even greater emphasis on education, health, and welfare. He could do so because Iraq had far more wealth and a much smaller population. Under his politically harsh but socially advanced rule, Iraq became the most modern nation-state in the Arab world; its people became the best educated, healthiest, and longest living of all the Arabs. Schools and hospitals were made free. Student population doubled, the ratio of doctors to population quadrupled, and personal income rose almost tenfold.[5]

Also, like Nasser, Saddam was expansive in his commitment to Arab nationalism. To win adherents to his cause and friends to his regime, in the years between 1973 and 1980 Saddam passed out about $9.5 billion in aid to other Arab and African regimes. After Nasser's death, when Saddam saw that Egypt was sliding back into traditionalism, he sought to increase his own power by bringing Egyptians not only

psychologically into “Arab brotherhood” but physically into Iraq. He planned to import whole villages of Egyptian peasants to Iraq to farm the potentially rich agricultural lands of the Euphrates and to increase the size of the Sunni Muslim minority. In fact, he settled more than one million Egyptians in Iraq.[6]

Also like Nasser, Saddam would struggle against the forces of religion. Already before he came to power, his predecessor, General Qasim, had confronted both the Sunni Muslim Brotherhood, which had been inspired by the Egyptian movement, and the Shiah movement al-Dawah (the call). Partly because of the Shiah movement, but also because of a complex of other issues, Saddam found a foreign enemy in neighboring Iran.

Hostilities along the edge of the Zagros Mountains and the Tigris-Euphrates complex were deeply imbedded in history. Beginning already in Babylonian times, recurring time after time in the struggles of the Roman Empire, and carried through the Ottoman Empire into modern times, rulers never lacked issues about which to fight Iranians. The trigger to modern hostilities was the waterway leading to the Gulf. Logically, regulating its use should have been simple, but neither the Iraqis nor the Iranians were governed by logic. What governed was nationalist emotion.

After the revolution that overthrew the shah, Saddam saw an opportunity to “win” this perpetual war. Iran’s revolutionary government had ruthlessly purged the shah’s American-trained officer corps, and it had lost its American source of arms, while the Iraqi army had been massively equipped by France and the Soviet Union. Always fearful of Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia offered to subsidize the war. And Iran’s ruler offered additional incentives by urging Iraq’s Shiah population to revolt, shelling frontier towns, and even, allegedly, trying to assassinate Saddam. So on September 22, 1980, began what would become Iraq’s “quagmire”—or, more accurately for the Middle East, its “quicksand.” Eight years of war wasted its resources, killed tens of thousands of its young men, and nearly bankrupted it. Proportionally far more costly than America’s war in Vietnam, the war with Iran was the death knell of Iraq’s social-nationalist revolution. Buildings were stopped in midconstruction, projects were abandoned, talents went unused, and enthusiasm languished.

As the war wasted Iraqi resources and drained its treasury, it also led Saddam into a war with Kuwait. That war seemed to Saddam justified historically, ideologically, and economically. Every Iraqi from its first king, Faisal, whom the British had installed in Iraq, to Qasim had regarded the splitting off of Kuwait from Iraq as an act of British imperialism.[7] Ideologically, Arab nationalists like Saddam regarded

conservative regimes like Kuwait's as agents or proxies of Britain and America. And Saddam believed that Kuwait was trying to wreck Iraq economically. There was some basis for his belief.

At the beginning of the Iraq-Iran War, Kuwait had strong reason to support Iraq, as it feared Iranian ambitions in the Gulf. It gave Iraq $10 billion toward the cost of war; as the Iraqi foreign minister then told me, "They will keep on helping us because, at base, they know that they are not supporting us but helping us to fight for our common defense. No, we are quite sure of the Kuwaitis." But Kuwait's incentive lapsed as the war turned into a stalemate. As the Iranian threat was thought to have disappeared, the Kuwaitis demanded repayment of what they had given. Worse for the Iraqis, they apparently sought to use the "oil weapon" to drive down the price of oil to a level that would not have sustained the Iraqi regime.

In retaliation and in quest for money, Iraq invaded Kuwait. That was a catastrophic mistake. In response to his attack on Kuwait, Saddam faced an unlikely coalition of enemies: from Syria, his by-then-estranged intellectual leader, the Syrian Baath; from Libya, his fellow social nationalist Muammar al-Qaddafi; from Arabia, the Saudi king; and even the groups that would become the al-Qaida movement. Usama bin Ladin offered to raise a military force to help expel the Iraqis from Kuwait. Ironically, Saddam had come close to creating Arab unity.

Not Bin Ladin, of course, but other Arab leaders were delighted when America intervened in 1991.[8] What would have happened had Saddam been allowed to continue at least his domestic program is a matter of speculation. It was not to be.

Saddam was one of the first secular politicians in the Muslim world to recognize that nationalism had failed to provide security and power. Probably nothing could have saved him from the blunders he made in attacking first Iran and then Kuwait, but his espousal of nationalism had not created a shield behind which he could take refuge. He made Iraq a target not only for the North but also for a remarkable assembly of nations of the South. Authorized by the UN Security Council, the American-led coalition that attacked him in 1991 included a number of Muslim countries.[9]

The result was a catastrophe for Iraq. The American-led allied military forces killed about thirty thousand of its soldiers and ten thousand of its people. Proportional to the population, that number was about five times the American losses in the Vietnam War. In addition, the massive air assault pulverized Iraq's infrastructure with eighty-eight thousand tons of bombs. Then, in the aftermath of the fighting, at American urging the UN imposed sanctions on the country.[10]

The sanctions were more severe than the vengeful reparations imposed at the end of the First World War on Germany that crippled the reforming successor government (the Weimar Republic) and played a role in the rise of Nazism.[11] The sanctions regime remained in effect for seven years. While little affecting the ruling group, sanctions drove the Iraqi people down into poverty: hospitals ran out of medicines and even soap to wash bedding, malnutrition was widespread, and infant mortality multiplied—an estimated five hundred thousand children below the age of five died and about one in four of the survivors suffered stunting. Even clean drinking water was unobtainable in many areas. Runaway inflation virtually wiped out the new middle class.

Iraq was also saddled with the demand that it pay $60 billion in reparations but was denied the means to earn the money; its control of its territory and airspace was restricted; it could not resupply its armed forces; and the regime concluded that the American government was intent on destroying it. It was, but Saddam was a shrewd and utterly ruthless dictator, which is why he survived. Iraq hit bottom in 1994, but Saddam did not fall from power.

Driven to the wall by the collapse of the Iraqi economy and society, shaken by massive revolts among the Kurds and Shiis, and distrusting even his own associates, Saddam had to find some new means to rally those of his compatriots whom he absolutely needed. The old system he had built on the ideology of nationalism lay in ruins. So he struck out anew. Initially, he reverted to the politics of premodern Iraq. He promoted and bribed tribal chiefs, giving them back the privileges he and his immediate predecessors had taken from them in the cause of modernization. And he concentrated power in the hands of the members of his own clan. His moves were driven by qawmiyah in its most primitive form, nationalism as practiced in ancient Arabian tribal society, where the clan, the qawm, was the focus of loyalty.

What jostled him out of this reversion to kinship fundamentalism was apparently the defection in 1995 of his daughter and her husband. If his own daughter could not be trusted, he must look elsewhere for a firm base for his life and his regime. He had to hurry because the Clinton administration was stepping up its pressure on his regime. The CIA organized flights of drones over Baghdad to drop leaflets urging the inhabitants to revolt and passed out millions of dollars to aspirants to the Baghdad “throne.” The director of one CIA program told the *Washington Post* that the CIA was working with an opposition group to engage in a series of car bomb attacks and assassinations.[12] Saddam knew that he must cast himself in another of the disguises he affected on huge wall portraits of himself throughout the cities. “Saddam the soldier” was dead; “Saddam the teacher” was a

no-show; “Saddam the bedouin chief” did not win much loyalty. So what was left was “Saddam the Muslim.”

Islam was the only tool left in Saddam’s kit. And, with the cunning for which he was famous, he grabbed it with both hands. To the astonishment of his associates, he ordered them to drop the previous policy of the regime, that his was a secular government like the ones that Atatürk and Reza Shah had created. Generals who a decade before had been warned that they faced prison if they flirted with Islamic organizations were ordered to make a public show of belief. More concretely, Saddam reverted to the traditional venture of Muslim rulers, building mosques to exemplify piety. His Baghdad mosque was massive. Finally, and most dramatically—indeed most bizarrely—he had his doctors bleed him. With several pints of his blood, calligraphers on his orders wrote out a copy of the Quran. Symbolically and physically he cast himself and his regime—which to him were always the same thing—in Islam.[13]

For Saddam, the public proclamation of Islamic piety was a ploy. It did not get him much support in Iraq. The population of the cities had been accustomed to a progressive secular development for years; the standard of living had soared until 1991. What happened after that was not affected by Saddam’s newfound faith. To the north, the Kurds were desperately trying to avoid all contact with Saddam’s regime. They were not swayed by the Sunnism they shared. Even more disaffected were the Shiis of the Iraqi south. While many of them had fought valiantly in the Iraq army even against fellow Shiah in Iran, Saddam’s regime had turned against their community, suppressed it in a campaign as savage as that against Kuwait, and tried to expel thousands of Shiis to Iran. This was the ugly culmination of interfaith and intercommunity hostilities that had marked Iraq-Iran history for hundreds of years.

Since Saddam did not run away or roll over and die, President George W. Bush and his neoconservative staff and advisers concluded that the only way to destroy the regime was by an even more massive and intrusive invasion than the shock-and-awe campaign that had been waged during the administration of his father. George H. W. Bush had stopped short of occupying the country. His son determined to attack and occupy Iraq entirely.[14]

The George W. Bush administration cast its decision in moral terms: Saddam was a monster and his regime must be overthrown so that the Iraqi people could claim the liberty that Americans wished to enable peoples everywhere to enjoy. More urgent, the public was told in a dramatic display at the UN Security Council that Iraq was on the point of acquiring nuclear weapons.[15] This was untrue and was known to be untrue when it was proclaimed.[16] It was an excuse for military action,

not a cause. Neutral observers realized that there were other reasons for the American attack. President George W. Bush and his neoconservative officials and advisers admitted that they wanted to destroy their (and Israel's) one remaining Arab adversary. They were unwilling to consider measures short of war or Iraqi offers to meet American demands. The Iraqi leaders, as I was told just a few days before the invasion by Iraq's deputy prime minister, believed that the Bush administration was determined to attack and that there was nothing Iraq could do that would get them to stop.[17]

Other possible reasons for the decision have been debated ever since. One that was proposed was that President George W. Bush delighted at being cast in the role of a war leader. Another widely shared belief was that the purpose of the American invasion was to control and profit from Iraqi oil. This was certainly discussed between the British and American governments and by the British government with the major British oil companies.[18] An informal gentleman's agreement was reached that all the spoils of the war were not to be given to American companies. In one revealing and crass exchange, the UK trade minister Baroness Symons "told BP [British Petroleum] that the Government believed British energy firms should be given a share of Iraq's enormous oil and gas reserves as a reward for Tony Blair's military commitment to US plans for regime change."[19]

Was this a determinant in setting policy? We do not know, but it is impossible to deny the result: the parties to the invasion obtained twenty-year concessions for half of Iraq's known oil reserves, then estimated at sixty billion barrels. From one field, Rumaila, BP, and its partner, the China National Petroleum Company, expected to make $658 million each year. Overall the postinvasion concessions were "the largest in the history of the oil industry."[20] They were estimated at 112 billion barrels. The massive study undertaken by the US government before the invasion pointed out that the invading powers, the "Coalition," would have to contend with the fact that Iraqis would not embrace the idea of having the Coalition run the country's oil industry because "nationalism in Iraqi oil industry is very strong."[21]

The North had returned to the South in a form that the British invaders of India, the Italian invaders of Libya, the French invaders of Algeria, the Russian and Chinese invaders of Central Asia, and the Dutch invaders of Aceh and Java would have recognized and approved of. As I traveled around much of Africa and Asia, not just in the Muslim world, I found that almost everyone I met believed that the United States had invaded Iraq to control its oil. When I raised other possible explanations, I was reminded that the US government did not object to, or at least did not carry out any actions against, dictators, no matter how brutal, in other countries. The often-repeated

jibe was telling: “If Iraq produced bananas instead of oil, it would not have been invaded.”

The results of the destruction of the state structure of Iraq under the rubric of “regime change” echo down to our times and can be measured in wrecked cities, streams of refugees, and broken bodies. They also included the virtual collapse of secular Arab nationalism.

Viewed in a larger perspective, the collapse of the regime of Saddam, following as it did the death of Nasser and the abandonment of his policies—despite the many extenuating circumstances, including, of course, military defeats by Israel and the United States—convinced many Arabs that their espousal of Arab unity and social nationalism would not lift them out of weakness and give them the sense of dignity they so avidly sought.[22] To find answers, they had to look elsewhere. It became evident to the younger generation that nationalism and Arab socialism had failed to aid them in the tasks they had taken on: to protect the Arab “nation” and to create a sense of national unity and dignity.

As I wrote previously, there were many reasons for failure—the rivalry or corruption of leaders, an imbalance of the military and civic components of society, the magnitude of the tasks to be performed with insufficient means, and, above all, foreign military threat and intervention—but a growing number of politically active people concluded that, regardless of the causes of failure, failure itself was starkly evident.

It was evident even to Nasser, whose life was dedicated to Pan-Arabism. As he told his closest colleagues, the seven members of Egypt’s Supreme Executive Committee, the highest political authority in the country, in the shock of the Arab defeat in 1967, “In my opinion, the present system has reached its limits and there has to be a new system . . . we have to see a new system.”[23]

With recognition that nationalism and even the structure of the state had failed to produce the reality of power or the sense of dignity that were their goals, disillusionment spread throughout Arab society. What remained was only the heritage of religion. To its manifestations I now turn.

PART FOUR

The Reassertion of Islam

For reasons that were only partly ideological, nationalism proved insufficient to enable the societies of the South to defend themselves. The military forces of the North were too powerful, the allurements of its material and cultural achievements were too strong, and native capacities were relatively too weak. Even when vigorously pursued, nationalism failed to galvanize adequate defense. These imbalances become clear at different times in the different societies.

The harbinger of the new thrust of militant Islam, the Muslim Brotherhood, was established in the 1930s. Its ideologue, the Egyptian cleric Sayyid Qutb (1906–1966), is read by scores of millions of Muslims throughout the South, from the Philippines to Nigeria. The Brotherhood and Qutb, in organizational and ideological terms, respectively, are at the heart of the violent struggles that now not only envelop the South but increasingly impact the North—China, Russia, Western Europe, and America. What they and their followers, including Usama bin Ladin and Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, urged on the Muslim world has evolved into the dangerous condition we face today.

The Muslim Brotherhood, Qutb, and Bin Ladin were not alone in returning to Islam for guidance. Opposite them in some doctrinal matters but agreeing with them in opposition to the North and in the need for a return to Islamic fundamentalism are members of the minority Shiah sect of Islam. Particularly in Iran, they have been more successful than the Sunnis in other countries. So, to see how the process begun among Sunnis has evolved into a separate but equal Pan-Islamic fundamentalist movement, I begin my account with the events leading to the overthrow of the Iranian monarchy and the 1978–1979 seizure of power by the followers of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

CHAPTER 31

Iran, the Revolutionary Shiah Muslim State

Just as Western Christianity divided itself into Catholics and Protestants, Muslims divided themselves into Sunnis and Shiis. And, like Christian Protestants, Shiis are further divided among a variety of sects. Most modern Iranians call themselves Shiah Muslims.[1] The name Shiah, meaning "partisans," was adopted because Shiis identify themselves as partisans of Caliph Ali and believe that, as the father of Muhammad's only grandsons, he should have been his heir and so the first caliph and his heirs should have followed him as leaders of Islam.

At the risk of some duplication, I will briefly discuss Shiism here because it forms the basis of Iranian politics and plays a major if subsidiary role in the culture and politics of the whole Muslim world.[2] For the people of the South, this bit of history is not recondite; it is as vivid among the sect's adherents as though it happened last week, and it is the cause of often severe conflict between Shiis and Sunnis. At the emotional center are Ali and his immediate family.

Ali was passed over in the selection of the first three caliphs, and, when finally "elected," he occupied the post for only five turbulent years before being murdered. The caliphate was then taken over by a member of the branch of the Quraish tribe that had originally rejected Muhammad and driven him out of Mecca, and the government Caliph Muawiyah established in Damascus, known as the Umayyad caliphate, reverted to pre-Islamic ways. In the eyes of the Shiis, today's Sunni Muslims are blackened by association with the Umayyads; worse, the ancestors of today's Sunnis killed Muhammad's grandsons, Hassan and Husain.

That, very briefly, is the conventional explanation of the split between Sunnism and Shiism, but the deeper causes are far more interesting. They reveal cultural and social trends that shape the modern Muslim world. To understand them, one must look first at the social basis of Shiism.

As I recounted in Chapter 3, the seventh-century Arab conquest of

the Iranian empire brought about a great social revolution. The incoming Arabs were relatively few, and at first their leaders tried to isolate them from the natives. They feared that their armies would melt into the non-Arab population. They were only briefly successful in isolating them. Because Iranians could not speak the conquering Arabs' language and found their customs strange, contact was minimal at first, but the two groups soon mingled. Arab garrisons became cities in which both Arabs and Iranians lived. Generally speaking the transition was not violent. Certainly there were abuses—there always are in invasions—but there was little destruction of property or looting. Large landowners and the wealthy urban class mostly retained their possessions, provided they paid taxes to the new regime. The peasants were not treated worse by Arab rulers than by the previous Iranian rulers. And, over three or four generations, most of the population converted to a local version of Islam.

But in this conversion, the Iranians retained many elements of their pre-Islamic religion. They said, in effect, "We too are Muslims but not Arab Muslims. We are Iranian Muslims." The distinctive Iranian form of Islam they developed influenced their descendants and today shapes Shiah movements all over Africa and Asia—most prominently in Iraq, Lebanon, Yemen, India, Pakistan, and Nigeria. About one in six Muslims today identifies as Shii. Shiism recast Islam as a new system of belief, with new sacred texts and a new mythology. For Sunnis, Shiism is a heresy, and Islamic fundamentalists react violently against it. The claim by both Sunnis and Shiis that they are followers of the orthodox religion is at the core of politics in the Muslim world.

The Iranian influence came largely from Zoroastrianism. Long before Judaism or Christianity was a coherent religion, the Prophet Zoroaster had enunciated a faith that deeply influenced both of them: Zoroastrianism declares the unity of the Divinity, proclaims the dualism of good and evil, anticipates the Last Day, and announces the coming of a Messiah.[3] Belief in the Last Day promoted a cult of martyrdom, the sense of evil required expiation of sin, and the recognition of humanity's weakness required the leadership of a priestly guild known as the magi. These beliefs were retained, modified, and carried into Shiah Islam.

The most striking manifestation of Shiah Islam is the yearly passion play, the Taaziye, which binds the community—the religious nation—together in a spectacular outpouring of shared grief with an effect on participants much like that of a mass confession. It occasions self-flagellation and even mutilation. Christian analogies are the medieval Flagellant rites and the Spanish Holy Week ceremonials to expiate the sin of the crucifixion of Jesus. More persistent than the Christian rites, the Taaziye is an outpouring of grief for the failure to protect the

grandsons of the Prophet.

Shiah Islam also got its religious structure from Zoroastrianism. Since humans are weak and ill informed, it said, they need guides. That is what the magi were. Christians knew them as the "wise men of the East" who appeared at the birth of Jesus. In Zoroastrianism their role was confined to ritual, but under Islam their role became, as all things in Islam ultimately are, a combination of religion, law, and politics. The Islamic version of the magi were the *mujtahids,* men learned in theological and legal matters whose task it was explain the true meaning of God's will. The leading mujtahids were awarded the additional title of ayatollah—the word means "sign" or "proof" of God. Generally there are only two or three ayatollahs living at any one time. By popular consent, they have the right and the power to issue decisions, *fatwas*, on all matters relating to religion and society. As I pointed out in Chapter 17, two ayatollahs played a major role in the 1905 Iranian revolution, and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini essentially made the 1979 revolution.

Mujtahids are the religious elite in Shiah Islam. But scattered widely throughout villages and neighborhoods are tens of thousands of lesser figures whom the Iranians call *mollas* (Arabic: *mullahs*). Mollas guide their followers, teach their children, help resolve disputes, and bury the dead. Not to push the analogy too far, but we may compare the Shiah establishment to the Catholic Church's hierarchy: the senior ayatollah might be thought of as a pope, other ayatollahs as cardinals, the mujtahids as bishops, and the mollas as priests or friars. While this correlation is not exact, it is important to note that the existence of a Shiah religious hierarchy is a major distinction from Sunni Islam.

This hierarchical structure made possible Ayatollah Khomeini's almost instant creation of his revolutionary government in 1979. He already had in place what English parliamentarians call a "shadow government." But it was more than just a political or religious instrument: it was a full-scale bureaucracy. It dealt with an Iranian nation that was in effect parallel to but different from the one ruled by the shah.

The shah, Western educated and committed to secularism, did not understand what this other nation was or how the religious establishment related to it. He thought his regime had a monopoly of power and that "his" Iran was the only Iran.[4] Such outside advice as he got either confirmed his opinions or failed to moderate them. His blindness enabled the Iranian Revolution to happen. So critical is this point that I will briefly consider the nature of Iranian society.

We would not be wrong to consider Iranian society a composite of what outsiders think of as religious and secular institutions, activities,

and loyalties. It is not just that ordinary citizens, like many Westerners, attend religious services regularly. Significant parts of their lives are handled within the sphere in which the religious establishment is dominant. Put another way, the lives of all Iranians were divided between what Muslims call *din wa dunya,* religious affairs and worldly affairs. Traditionally, the role of the state in Iran was limited to dunya—defense of the realm. But, as education spread and the population became more politicized, an increasing number of Iranians began to think that the regime actually provided nothing, since it did not even protect the country from foreign invasion. And, for the little security it provided, it took a great deal. It got its revenues from taxes, which most Iranians regarded as a form of larceny. The religious establishment, meanwhile, supplied evident and appreciated services. Mollas educated the young, cared for the elderly, and buried the dead, while mujtahids preserved the legal order, embodied the formal religion, and lent dignity to the nation. What they did was supported mainly by freely given donations. In sum, the state was seen to be abstract, exploitative, and best avoided, while the religious establishment was seen to be necessary, benign, and popular. These differences, immediately evident to the vast majority of the population who lived and worked in villages, emerged most strongly over questions of land ownership.

In Iran, as in most Asian and African societies, village tradition and practice determined who "owned" land. A plot was effectively owned by the person who plowed and harvested it. Left alone, typical villagers managed to get by at a subsistence level. But they were rarely left alone. Even though they believed the land was theirs, they had to pay what they regarded as protection money to the shah and his favorites. The rich and powerful regarded the peasant farmer as a sheep—and even used the word—whose fate was to be shorn. To get their share of the land's produce, they sent out roving tax collectors who often mounted raids against the villagers to seize as much as they could, sometimes to the point that the villagers abandoned their lands and fled.

Not surprisingly, villagers avoided the dunya, the state. Alien to their way of life, the officers of the state and urban elite were the enemy. Such solace as they received came from the religious establishment, represented among them by the mollas, who spoke their dialect and were often fellow villagers or even kinsmen.

This was the Iran that Reza set out to change. Under his despotic rule, the state invaded the preserve of the religious establishment: it took over the institutions of education, public health, and adjudication of law and pushed the religious establishment out. But the impact of his programs was restricted. While some of them increased migration

to the cities, the state did little to meet the needs of the urban poor. Even more restricted was the impact of Reza's programs in the rural areas. The peasant farmers who lived in Iran's forty-five thousand or so villages continued a way of life that long predated the coming of Islam. Communities were small because access to water was limited. During their narrow and brief lives, villagers produced their own food, manufactured most of their clothing and equipment, married among themselves, and shared such community facilities as meeting places, guest houses, public baths, and burial grounds. When trouble came, which was often, whole villages moved to the cities; then, when a modicum of peace returned, a new village would be established in place of the old. The peasant often fled or was killed, but the peasantry was eternal. Reza could not change that.

The "reforms" that Reza began, and that his son Muhammad Reza continued, mainly affected the relatively affluent urban part of the population but left the urban poor and the villagers to the battered but steadfast religious establishment. In 1979 it would lead its followers into revolution.

Like his father, Muhammad Reza devoted much of his thought and effort to relations with foreigners. Until about 1950, Iran was a poor country and was more the object than the actor in foreign affairs. Its major asset with which to protect itself and its major attraction to foreign domination were the same: its enormous reserves of oil.

An English promoter, William D'Arcy, bought a concession for most of Iran in 1901 for the equivalent of roughly $3 million in today's currency. When oil was discovered in 1908, he founded a British company, Anglo-Persian Oil, to exploit it.[5] Almost immediately, the British government acquired a controlling interest in the company and began to convert the Royal Navy from coal to oil. Oil became a British vital national interest, and to extract, refine, and market it, Britain treated the southwest of Iran as a colony, on which it built the world's largest refinery. There the British flag was flown and Iranian officials were tolerated only as visitors. Iranians were not favored as workers; preference was given to workers from elsewhere in the empire, particularly Indians. Iranian officials were not allowed access to the company financial accounts. In short, the enclave at Abadan was extraterritorialized.

When the Second World War began, the Russians and the British divided Iran, the Russians taking the north, while the British took the south. Neither power paid even lip service to the Iranian government, which in fact hardly existed. Reza Shah, who talked about neutrality, was packed off into exile, and his twenty-one-year-old son, Muhammad Reza, was installed as a puppet. All that mattered to the Soviet Union, Britain, and (when it too entered the war) America was

the extraction of oil and the shipment of equipment, arms, and food to Russia. As in India and Egypt, the issue of the nature of the nation was put on hold.

When the war ended, the educated Iranian elite were determined to recapture their country. Iranian officials managed to get the Russians to end their support of separatist movements in the north, but in the south, the British proved more tenacious. In 1945, Britain was essentially bankrupt, and one of its few sources of foreign currency was cheap oil: the government paid the Iranians only 9 percent of value of what it exported, so their profits were very large. Keeping this arrangement going required them to control the Iranian government. Even the incoming Labour government, which was ready to give up India, was determined to keep Iran.

Its hold did not last. The British had gotten away with rigging the price and profits of oil production for nearly forty years, but a new wind was blowing out of Arabia. After the American oil company in Saudi Arabia (Aramco) agreed on January 1, 1951, to split profits from the sale of oil fifty-fifty, Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh began pushing for a similar deal. The British were furious, furious with both the Americans and Mosaddegh. They were even angrier when they learned that Mosaddegh was meeting with a senior official of the Truman administration to get American help in forcing Britain to agree to a new arrangement. Mosaddegh and the American assistant secretary of state George McGhee, an experienced oil man, actually produced a feasible deal.

The British were determined to disrupt it. Their opportunity came when President Truman was succeeded by Dwight D. Eisenhower in 1953. As quickly as it could, the British government sent its chief of intelligence for the Middle East to Washington to persuade the Eisenhower administration to join in overthrowing the Iranian government. The British aim was to protect their oil deal, but the MI6 officer alleged that the action was needed to stop Iran from slipping into communism. In America in the 1950s, that was a winning argument. Eisenhower fell for it. He ordered the CIA to set up a joint espionage program under Colonel Montgomery Woodhouse of MI6 and Kermit Roosevelt of the CIA to overthrow the Mosaddegh government.[6]

Far from being either pro-Communist or pro-Russian, Prime Minister Mosaddegh had turned decisively to America. Drawing on the agreement he had worked out with Secretary McGhee, he had commissioned the American corporation Morrison-Knudson International in 1947 to produce a preliminary plan to modernize and invigorate the Iranian economy. That plan eventually grew into the world's most comprehensive and best-funded development program.

After the CIA and MI6 overthrew his government, in an action in which the Iranian public played almost no part, and reinstalled the shah, American institutions and the American government would play major roles in implementing the economic components of Mosaddegh's program.

With the shah back in power, the American government also began what became a generation-long program to turn the Iranian army into a modern, NATO-standard force. It was equipped and trained by America, and its officers were sent to study in American military staff colleges. The shah also began, with American and other foreign assistance, a program to develop nuclear weapons. He and most of his domestic and foreign advisers in the 1970s believed that Iran was on the way to becoming a major world power. As an American ambassador to Iran wrote in 1978, "Our destiny is to work with the Shah."[7] For America during the twenty-six years following the coup, the shah was Iran and Iran was the shah. By implementing the economic aspects of Mosaddegh's program, the shah did much to improve the lives of Iranians, but he refused to allow Iranians any role in deciding policy. Iranians had no legal way to express their political opinions. Thus he loosed forces—a growing sense of capacity and a growing sense of frustration—that he could not control. His reliance on despotism put him out of touch with the elements of society that might have saved him—a failure hastened by the ugliness of his tactics. His father, in less politicized times, got away with it; he could not. He never understood that he could not safely build the capacity of his society while refusing to share power.[8] Thus, as political expectations of the public outran economic improvements, he lost his mandate. As the ayatollahs had told his predecessor during the 1905 revolution, if the shah failed to fulfill his duties or exceeded his authority, the "nation"—meaning themselves—had the right to choose another shah.

In a final act of royal suicide, in 1978, Muhammad Reza Shah ordered his large and superbly equipped army to fire on demonstrators. Instead of shooting at their friends and relatives, the soldiers laid down their arms, threw off their uniforms, and joined the demonstrators. Demonstrations became continuous, and the regime had no power to stop them. It was 1953 all over again, but this time there was no CIA or MI6 to put the shah back in power. Iran had changed. A new nation was being born. Muhammad Reza left Iran forever on January 16, 1979.

A few days later, on February 1, Ayatollah Khomeini ended his exile in Paris and flew to Tehran, where he was met at the airport by an almost delirious welcoming crowd of some six million people. He came alone, but he had a government in readiness, the Shiah religious

establishment. Iran then had no functioning secular government: the shah was gone, and over the years he had destroyed or co-opted the liberal democratic followers of Mosaddegh. Khomeini had no competitor, and Iranians almost literally threw themselves at his feet. He could destroy the vestiges of the old regime at leisure, something he set about doing with great brutality.

In the euphoria of the moment, previously disenfranchised Iranians rushed to help in the destruction. A group of young students climbed over the walls of the American embassy on November 4, 1979, and took almost the entire staff hostage. The embassy was an obvious target since in Iran embassies were traditionally the outposts of foreign rulers. The British and Russian embassies loomed over Tehran like ministates, but the American embassy outdid them all: it had become the command center for the myriad activities of the US military, foreign aid, intelligence, and other organizations. Before the CIA coup, Iranians had treated it as almost a place of pilgrimage; after the revolution it was called a "den of spies."[9]

The young followers of Khomeini found evidence for the spying charge. They collected thousands of documents, some of which detailed American espionage and Iranian collaboration. Most of the documents had been shredded, but, with the schools closed, the students had plenty of time and the incentive to reconstruct them. They did, and the nearly fifty volumes of documents that were later published were seen by Iranians as conclusive proof of what they had long suspected: that America, the latest and most powerful representative of the global North, had completely dominated Iran. They concluded that for all its posturing, their government had been a façade and the shah, for all his grandeur, a puppet. For many Iranians, that finding justified the revolution. The regime used it to proclaim that those who did not agree with its increasingly brutal acts were themselves foreign agents and enemies who had to be, and legitimately could be, attacked, imprisoned, or executed.

That is the nature of revolutions: in the excitement of action, violence becomes routine and conspiracy is seen as a given. Not only the relatively privileged young students who seized the American embassy but also blue-collar workers and former household servants took up the hunt for enemies. They formed what were called *komites,* vigilante committees like the hundreds of "committees of safety" that were formed in America in 1775, the *comités de salut public* formed in 1793 and 1794 during the French Revolution, and the *revolutsionnye komitetys* formed in Russia in 1917. In Iran, as public security broke down, the komites looted the houses of the rich, paid off old scores, and held the owners for ransom or hustled them off to the hastily established and self-proclaimed revolutionary tribunals.

The revolutionary tribunals were perhaps the revolution's ugliest manifestation. They resembled the "peoples' courts" used in China during the Cultural Revolution. Khomeini authorized them as the guardians of the revolution and encouraged the komites to hunt down and denounce all those who might oppose his program. Rather like Mao Zedong in 1966, he was willing to countenance these events because they speeded the transformation from the Old Regime. With the example of the 1953 CIA-MI6 intervention in mind, he wanted to destroy any group or person who might aid a countercoup.

One such group was the Mojahidin-e Khalq, which had long struggled against the shah and had contributed to the forces that overthrew him. As Khomeini's regime grew even more repressive than the shah's government, the Mojahidin-e Khalq tried to stake out a position of opposition as it had to the shah's regime. With all representative institutions closed to them, and in fear of their lives, its members took up the only weapon within reach: terrorism. They planted a bomb in a room where the leaders of Khomeini's regime were meeting and killed virtually the entire second tier of the revolutionary leadership. Then they set off another that killed the president, the prime minister, and the chief of police. Eventually they killed hundreds of leading figures.

With his total control of the repressive organs of the state, as well as the religious establishment, Khomeini was able to strike back and did so, killing thousands of Mojahidin-e Khalq members and driving the survivors into exile.

The rule that Khomeini established was, he said, "ordained by God," with himself as the supreme authority who exercised the "rule of the religious jurist." That term in Farsi, *velayat-e faghih,* was the title of a book he had earlier written describing his philosophy and strategy. The religious jurist, the *faghih,* was reputed to know God's will from a lifetime of study of religious texts and so was authorized to issue binding decisions. No one was justified in opposing him: he spoke with God's voice. Khomeini never doubted or allowed anyone else to doubt his authority, but he made one, very small, concession. For what apparently were cosmetic purposes, he submitted his rule to a referendum. The result was foreordained because the issue was posed as support for the revolution or restoration of the (American-controlled) monarchy. The regime claimed almost total approval.

Khomeini adapted to his mission another quasi-religious Iranian custom. In times of trouble, religious leaders had often enrolled street gangs to protect themselves and enforce their orders. In May 1979 he created a more formal and ultimately much larger force, the Revolutionary Guard, to replace the by-then-defunct American-trained army.

What to do about the hostages taken from the American embassy posed difficult problems for the fledgling Iranian administration. Khomeini's aide, close friend, and the then prime minister, Mehdi Bazargan, wanted to release the captives, send the students back to school, and get Iran back to "normal." Khomeini did not support this plan and accused Bazargan of having sold out to the Americans. As the Swiss journalist Jacques Mallet du Pan wrote of the French Revolution, *"La révolution dévore ses enfants"* (Revolution devours its children), and Bazargan was the first such casualty in Iran.

Meanwhile, in Washington, President Jimmy Carter was being attacked for his failure to take military action against Iran in retaliation for its having seized American officials. Negotiations failed: the Iranians demanded recognition of the new regime, compensation for past actions, and an apology in return for the release of the hostages. President Carter realized that politically he could not meet their demands. So the hostages sat in confinement and pressures built in America for action to free them. Then, unexpectedly, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) tried to help. Yassir Arafat flew to Tehran to plead for the hostages' release. Arafat's intervention was partially successful in that it got thirteen relatively low-ranking men and women released, but all the senior officials, who reportedly were being treated severely, remained in custody. They would be detained for over a year.

Finally, after months of frustration and under attack by domestic critics, in April 1980 Carter authorized a military rescue mission. It was a reckless gamble and it failed. In retrospect, its failure was a blessing in disguise. Had it reached Tehran, it would have resulted in the death of perhaps thousands of Iranians, and probably also the murder of the American hostages. It would have been an act of war, and, weighed in the memory of the CIA-MI6 coup, it would have worsened repression in Iran. In the event, after the mission was aborted, the Iranians decided to release the hostages. Allegedly at the suggestion of representatives of the campaign team for the presidency of Ronald Reagan, the Iranians released them not to Carter but rather to Reagan almost the minute he became president in January 1981.[10]

The Iranians needed arms because, in September 1980, long unresolved tensions between Iraq and Iran had exploded into what became an eight-year, bitterly fought, and horribly costly war. In that war, the United States supported Saddam Husain with money, equipment, and, most important, up-to-the-minute battlefield satellite images that enabled him to win crucial battles and inflict hundreds of thousands of casualties on the Iranians.

To the Iranians, American support of Iraq came to be seen as a preliminary move toward regime change in Iran. As the well-informed

American journalist Dexter Filkins wrote, in Iran's leaders viewed the Iraqi invasion as "not so much an Iraqi plot as a Western one. American officials were aware of Saddam's preparations to invade Iran in 1980, and they later provided him with targeting information used in chemical-weapons attacks; the weapons themselves were built with the help of Western European firms. The memory of these attacks is an especially bitter one. 'Do you know how many people are still suffering from the effects of chemical weapons?' Mehdi Khalaji, a fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, said. 'Thousands of former soldiers. They believe these were Western weapons given to Saddam.' "[11] The war ended in a stalemate that left both regimes intact but their societies grievously harmed.

In President Reagan's second term, the supply of arms to Iran moved a step further. Ostensibly, they were supplied in order to get Iranian help in freeing another group of American hostages held by a Shiah group in Lebanon, but really it was to fund an illegal American-organized coup d'état in Nicaragua. The scheme failed to accomplish its objective but nearly brought down the Reagan administration and further soured American-Iranian relations. They quickly turned violent.

Fearing that Iran would try to interdict the flow of oil, the US Navy sank most of the Iranian navy, and, on July 3, 1988, it shot down an Iran Air civilian passenger plane in Iranian airspace, killing everyone aboard. This was not the only such incident, but it was taken by many people in the South as an indication of the double standards of the North. The US government awarded the man who ordered the firing of the missile that brought down the Iran Air flight a decoration, yet when a Pan American airliner was downed over Lockerbie, Scotland, five months later, the US government sought the man responsible for the bombing as a war criminal. Arguably, the two cases did not exactly match, but in the eyes of the Iranians they did.

During the administration of Presidents George H. W. Bush (1989–1993) and Bill Clinton (1993–2001), tensions were not resolved, but, perhaps ironically, they were eased by troubles in other areas. The Iraq-Iran War ended in a ceasefire but not peace in August 1988, and, at the end of a decade of bitter war, the Soviet Union withdrew its army from Afghanistan in 1989. That too did not bring peace: foreign invasion was followed by a tragic civil war and the rise of the Taliban movement. Relations among the Arab countries were almost constantly on the brink of open hostilities, and in August 1990 Saddam invaded and occupied Kuwait. In response a huge American-led coalition of forces moved into Saudi Arabia, and in January 1991 it attacked Iraqi forces in Kuwait and Iraq itself. Meanwhile terrorist attacks continued. One of the most dramatic targeted a rented

dormitory for the American military, the Khobar Towers near the Saudi-American oil center of Dhahran, on June 25, 1996, killing 19 soldiers and wounding 358.

While focus was on Iraq, relations between America and Iran swayed dangerously between armed conflict and diplomatic discussion. The Clinton administration imposed sanctions on Iran in 1995, but after the surprise election of Muhammad Khatami as president of Iran in 1997, both the Iranian and American governments put out tentative feelers for better relations. In March 2000, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright announced the ending of sanctions and in September of that year held the first ministerial-level meeting with the Iranian government for twenty-one years.

What had seemed the beginning of a new era was cut short by the election of the George W. Bush administration in November 2000. Guided by the neoconservatives, Bush announced a hardline policy toward the "Axis of Evil." Partly in response, the Iranian government, then led by Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the successor to Ayatollah Khomeini, who had died in 1989, also turned bellicose. Borrowing a term Mahatma Gandhi coined for Great Britain, the Iranians labeled America "the Great Satan." Iranian media meticulously laid out the Iranian view of the historical record and used it to warn its public that America was only waiting for a provocation to attack them. The two nations hovered on the brink of war. American forces ringed Iran and established a network of bases that could be used as springboards for invasion.

Not only were the weapons of war prepared but the public in both countries was being prepared as well. In America, the neoconservatives, although few in number, were strategically positioned in the Defense Department and in the inner circle of President George W. Bush's advisers. Supported by the Republican Party and well served by the media, they mounted a well-funded, dedicated, and clever campaign in Congress. They argued that Iran was an "existential" danger to America and that its regime must be overthrown. On their own side, the Iranians prepared for a guerrilla campaign to meet invading forces. War seemed imminent.

Yet, under the surface, Iran helped to effect American policy against the Taliban in Afghanistan, devoted a significant part of its armed forces to interdicting the drug trade from Afghanistan to Europe, and deported suspected terrorists of the al-Qaida movement. Despite these activities, President Bush banned all diplomatic contact with Iran even by his senior officials. The flash point in the events, which fortunately never came, was focused on nuclear weapons.

As it had done to justify the attack on Iraq, the Bush administration charged that Iran was secretly building nuclear weapons. Ironically,

had the shah survived, Iran would have long since acquired nuclear weapons. His program was begun with American assistance and he had been determined to carry it out. It was Ayatollah Khomeini who stopped the nuclear program, and it was Khomeini's successor Ali Khamenei who finally made it possible to resolve the nuclear issue in 2016.[12]

As is the case so often in diplomatic affairs, the context had to change before progress could be made. The latter years of the Bush administration in America and the Ahmed-e Najed administration in Iran produced only a litany of charges, denials, and countercharges. The arrival of the Barack Obama administration in 2009 and the Hassan Rouhani administration in Iran in July 2013 changed the context. The change began with a meeting of the foreign ministers of the two countries and was followed by a telephone call from Obama to Rouhani on September 28. That was the first contact between the leaders of the two countries in thirty-four years. Faced with bellicose critics in their governments, both administrations moved slowly and kept alive the option for military action. Each government assigned its foreign minister, John Kerry for America and Mohammed Javad Zarif for Iran, to negotiate. Neither negotiator had a free hand. Any result Kerry obtained would have to be approved by the US Senate, and Zarif similarly had to submit his results to a guidance council of clerics. Both came under heavy attack from within their own governments.[13] But the two men stalwartly engaged in a remarkable series of meetings that began in September 2014 and lasted nearly a year. Finally, after an exhausting seventeen days of continuous talks, agreement was reached on July 14, 2015. It seemed to all observers that one result of the marathon negotiations has been a mellowing of the Iranian Revolution. In the general relief that has come with the decrease of the danger of war and the partial end of sanctions, the Iranian economy is opening and the strictures of the extreme version of Islam imposed on the Iranian people are easing. But the results, as became evident in the American electoral campaign in 2016, remain fragile. As proclaimed by the newly elected US president Donald Trump, the governments in both countries, spurred by the radical right wing in each and encouraged by Israel and pro-Israeli Americans, appear to be reversing the course laid out in the tedious negotiations that moved toward peace; unless halted, America and Iran could find themselves headed toward what could become the most disastrous war yet suffered in the South of the world.

CHAPTER 32

The Muslim Brotherhood

Egypt, like Iran, was a Shiah state in the Middle Ages, but today the Egyptian Muslim population is almost entirely Sunni. This difference between modern Iran and Egypt is manifested in the structure of Islam in the two countries. Iran has a well-defined hierarchy that rises from village clerics and mollas, through scholars, jurists, and mujtahids, and to the small circle of people at the apex who are revered for their great learning, the ayatollahs. Iranian Shiism drew on this structure's organizational capacity in the 1905–1907 and 1978–1979 revolutions. Egyptian Sunnism did not develop such a hierarchy. Village clerics, mullahs, are essentially the same in both countries, and Egypt does have *qadis* (judges), but the closest Egyptian equivalent to an ayatollah, the grand mufti (*mufti am*), is a government appointee who may be respected but is not independent.

While I find no indication that any Egyptians were trying to copy the Shiah structural model, a movement begun in 1928 created something comparable. Since it became one of the most important organizations in the Muslim world, the Muslim Brotherhood deserves our close attention.

The founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, Hassan al-Banna, was not a recognized religious scholar or even a mullah.[1] From an early age, he was caught up in what his father, who was a religious scholar, would have seen as secular politics. Deeply disturbed by the events of the failed revolution of 1919, he took part in demonstrations against the British and the Egyptian royal government. Unlike the Iranian revolutions, these outbursts were not guided or energized by religion; they were essentially secular and were anchored in a student movement in the emerging urban privileged class. This was the path al-Banna first followed. In 1923, against his father's wishes, he entered the secular teacher-training institute, the Dar al-Ulum, in Cairo.

Upon graduating, al-Banna was assigned to teach in a government primary school in the Suez Canal city of Ismailia, then the garrison

city of the British occupation forces and the headquarters of the Suez Canal Company. He was appalled by the living conditions of the Egyptian workers he saw there, and, together with six laborers, he formed the little group that grew into the Muslim Brotherhood, the Ikhwan al-Muslimin.

In al-Banna's original concept, the Brotherhood aimed only to provide social services to workers. But he soon found that even this limited task could not be carried out under British rule, and he came to believe that if the condition of workers was to improve, the whole system had to change. As far as is known, he did not seek the stimulus of European social and economic thinkers; what he knew of them is unclear.

Since his movement was triggered by the exploitation of workers, and he saw no way to remedy this situation under the existing government, al-Banna thought the government must be replaced. Some Egyptians, Algerians, and others farther afield like the Vietnamese thought they had found the alternative in Marxism. Al-Banna does not seem to have considered Marxism a feasible or attractive answer. As far as I can find, he decided from the beginning that the solution he sought lay in Islam. He seems always to have shared with the fundamentalists an overarching belief that God had laid out the perfect social pattern for humankind in the Quran and through the life of Muhammad.

That pattern was articulated in the *Shariah.* Both Muslim individuals and their governments were required to obey it, but al-Banna concluded, as Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and even the secular nationalists had argued, that Muslims could effect God's order only if they won independence and evicted their imperialist masters. Thus his ideology came to rest on three bases: human beings deserved an appropriate lifestyle; that good life could be achieved in Islam; and Islam could function only in freedom, which could be achieved only through independence.

The task for Muslims, therefore, began with independence: the British must be driven out of Egypt. Then the rulers and institutions they had created and left to carry out their work when they departed or went undercover must be replaced. The governments they left behind called themselves independent, but they were really just puppets or stand-ins. This reality was evident in their policies: they did not make Islam—which al-Banna had come to see as the core of Egyptianness—the basis of their administration. They were part of the problem and could never be part of the solution. The second step toward implementing a truly Muslim society was therefore to get rid of them. That was the domestic strategy of the Brotherhood.

The Muslim world strategy followed. Once they had achieved the

scope to implement the Shariah in Egypt, and once they had made Egypt into the society God intended, true believers should move toward a union of the Muslim world. Their ultimate aim was to re-create the caliphate as they imagined it to have been.

Until about 1936, the Egyptian government paid no attention to the Muslim Brotherhood. According to insiders, the prime minister "thought that [al-Banna] . . . was one of the village chiefs who are the backbone of the Wafd [the then-ruling party]. . . . The Egyptian Ministry of Education continued until recently to be ignorant of the fact that al-Banna, the teacher in [one of] its schools, was the Director-General of the moslem Brethren."[2] The titular rulers, whom al-Banna considered to be British puppets and who were mainly wealthy landowners, thought of the Brotherhood, if they considered the rather obscure organization at all, as just a group of do-gooders or religious teachers.

As it grew, the Brotherhood indeed fostered that impression. It became a political missionary society, concentrating its efforts on education and propaganda. As it acquired the means to do so, it began to publish a number of magazines and pamphlets. Since they were excluded from the distribution channels of the government-approved media, its publications were passed from hand to hand. As one hand reached for the next, the publications arrived in every village in the country. Since many villagers were illiterate, they were often read aloud and discussed in thousands of coffee shops, which were the "social clubs" where poorer Egyptians gathered to gossip. Before the advent of television, and in a time when radios were rare, the Brotherhood thus accessed Egypt's most pervasive system of communication.

When the Second World War began, the "missionaries" of the Brotherhood were banned by the Egyptian prime minister Husain Sirri Pasha on behalf of the British government. As the leaders of the Brotherhood continually violated the ban, going from one urban and rural group to another to lecture, Sirri had al-Banna and the deputy leader arrested. That action backfired: it gave the Brotherhood cachet with the generally anti-British and antimonarchical public. Whether or not they understood what the Brotherhood stood for or what it aimed to do, ordinary Egyptians were apt to see the government's action against it as essentially the same as what they blamed the government for doing to themselves. Since nine out of ten Egyptians claimed to have suffered some sort of government injustice, the Brotherhood gained national prominence. Almost overnight, the tiny, obscure group became Egypt's largest popular organization.

Al-Banna's next move shows that he was as surprised as the government by his movement's sudden popularity. In a stunning

reversal of his charges that the Parliament was a fraud and a front for British rule, he toyed with the idea of running for a seat in it. To run for membership in this system was to be co-opted. That was exactly what had happened to the leaders of the 1919–1920 Wafd revolt. Then, the leaders of the uprising had moved off the streets, where they had protested the British refusal to allow them to send a delegation (*wafd*) to the peace conference, into the comfortable and lucrative offices of government. The Wafd Party became the linchpin of British rule as its radical young leaders joined the establishment.

What al-Banna had in mind has never been satisfactorily explained. He was (temporarily) saved from co-optation by what appears to have been a private deal. Prime Minister Nahhas Pasha persuaded him not to run for Parliament, allegedly because Egypt was (as usual) under martial law. The prime minister must have been amused by this replay of his own career: as one of the leaders of the Wafd revolt against the British, he had gone into Parliament himself, doing precisely what he now urged al-Banna to avoid. Al-Banna perhaps also saw the irony. In any event, he agreed but retained the option of entering regular political life in the future. That satisfied the prime minister, who returned to the Brotherhood the printing presses the government had confiscated.

During the Second World War, government suasion was replaced by British military rule and the threat of imprisonment or hanging for agitation. The Brotherhood remained relatively quiet, at least in its overt activities, while carrying out covert armed attacks on the British military and government police. At the end of the war, when British control was relaxed, al-Banna and other Brothers revisited the option they had staked out to run for election. They were defeated in an obviously rigged election, and I infer from their records that this defeat confirmed their already established distrust of the state and their predilection for relying only on their separate quasi-covert organization as they prepared to overthrow what they regarded as a rotten system.[3]

So elaborate was the organization al-Banna had created that it could and did function as an alternative government. At the top was an executive, the *maktab al-Irshad,* appointed by a sort of parliament, the *shura.* The shura passed edicts that were binding on all Brothers and created courts to determine compliance and adjudicate disputes. It also periodically ruled on the fundamental issue of how—or whether—the Brotherhood should interact with the royal government. Under the executive were departments, like miniature government ministries, that dealt with community affairs. Among them was a foreign office that dealt with Brotherhoods or affiliated organizations established in other Muslim countries. This was a remarkably far-flung

operation that in time established organizations virtually throughout the Muslim world. Supporters in Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Bahrain, Lebanon, Somalia, Sudan, and, in Asia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Pakistan, Kashmir, and Afghanistan gave the Brotherhood a range of foreign activities that probably exceeded those of Egypt itself. Beyond the Muslim world, the Brotherhood also attracted followers in the émigré communities in Britain and France. Through its publications, it fostered the sense, indeed, of brotherhood among Muslims—something the nominally Muslim governments were constantly claiming to do but failing to achieve. It thus laid the foundations of subsequent Muslim movements.

In Egypt itself, the Brotherhood concentrated on social welfare under the Quranic command requiring the payment of a wealth tax (*zakat*). Thus the organization was seen to anticipate the Islamic ideal society, where the rich were to subsidize most of the functions secularists saw as the job of the state—maintaining hospitals and schools, running law courts, and providing social security. This program would later become the model for Hamas in Gaza; it also set a precedent for the Islamic State.

Having criticized and threatened the governments of most of the countries in which it operated, the Brotherhood was usually regarded as subversive. From time to time, it was banned in Egypt and elsewhere in the Muslim world.[4] Al-Banna certainly foresaw a mortal struggle, and from the beginning he adopted a cell structure to protect the membership. Each cell (*usra*) was made up of half a dozen Brothers and linked to a few others horizontally, while vertically it formed a part of the pyramid whose apex was the executive office.

The Algerian militants would later employ a similar structure in their struggle against the French.[5] It was the logical way to carry out political and quasi-military actions without being apprehended by government security organizations. But apparently the cell structure was not effective in Egypt, because the Egyptian intelligence services were able to arrest thousands of members in the years after al-Banna was murdered on February 12, 1949.[6]

If the purpose of the cell structure was to elude intelligence services, it also had an unintended side effect: it facilitated growth. Families—the basic meaning of the word *usra*—could join as groups and, together with their neighbors, form the next layer of the pyramid. Growth was explosive. The numbers are probably only guesses, but the trend is unquestioned: the organization had somewhat less than a thousand members in 1936, perhaps two hundred thousand a few years later, and about two million in 1948, when the issue of Israel's expulsion of the Palestinians captivated the thought and

emotions of the Egyptian people.

Like the other Egyptian parties and many European nationalist organizations of the 1930s, the Brotherhood created a paramilitary force.[7] Each regional branch designated certain members as armed militants or rangers (*jawwalah*) who were available for street demonstrations. More organized formations (*kataib*) were given military training and sometimes supplied with weapons. In addition, in the middle of the Second World War, the Brotherhood created a special force, known as the secret formation, that harried British and Egyptian military and police installations and later, in 1948, sent volunteers to fight in Palestine. It was a member of this group who in that year assassinated Egyptian prime minister Nuqrashi Pasha, whom the Brotherhood accused of treason in the Palestine war.

The Brotherhood's most important activity was not in its paramilitary operations, none of which led to any lasting change, but rather in education and propaganda, which did have a major impact.

In its early days, the Brotherhood did not aim at taking power itself but rather at creating an environment in which a "pure" Islamic society could come into being, first in Egypt and then throughout the Muslim world. It believed that this was possible because, as al-Banna wrote at the end of the Great Depression, Western civilization was "bankrupt and in decline. . . . Its foundations are crumbling. . . . Its political foundations are being destroyed by dictatorships, and its economic foundations are being swept away by crises. The millions of its wretched unemployed offer their testimony against it."[8] In contrast to this world of failed materialism and a lack of meaningful human relationships, he proclaimed, "Brothers, you are . . . a new spirit making its way into the heart of this nation and revivifying it through the Quran: a new light is dawning and scattering the darkness of materialism through the knowledge of God, a resounding voice is rising and echoing the message of the Prophet."[9]

Only after al-Banna's successors decided it was impossible to impose the "message of the Prophet" without political power did the Brotherhood become a political party. Then, after a tumultuous period in which most of its leaders and many of their followers spent years in prison, it engaged in the election of 2012 that brought it briefly to power. Like Muslim regimes in Pakistan, Somalia, and Libya, the Brotherhood was overthrown in a military coup. The Brotherhood's attempt to impose the Shariah on Egyptian society was stopped, thousands of the members were arrested, and the Brotherhood's leader, who had become the president of Egypt, was imprisoned and

threatened with execution. Whether the suppression of this brand of militant Islam will be permanent or temporary cannot be predicted, but what seems certain is that the ideas represented by the Brotherhood have not been completely uprooted. Indeed, they have spread far beyond the reach of the new Egyptian government.[10] Therefore, despite General Abdel Fattah Sisi's assumption of power, it is important to understand what those ideas are, and for this I turn to al-Banna's protégé, the leader of the Brotherhood's educational and propaganda efforts, Sayyid Qutb.

CHAPTER 33

The Philosopher of the Muslim Revolt, Sayyid Qutb

Sayyid Qutb is the most influential ideologist of the modern Muslim world. Tens of millions of Muslims have read, pondered, and been motivated by his writings. He is the "prophet" of militant Islam. So it is immensely important to read carefully what he has to say. I will try here to catch the main points, where possible in his own words.

I begin where he began, in 1906 in a village in Upper Egypt. His starting point hardly differs from that of an earlier Egyptian writer, Rifaa Rafi al-Tahtawi, whom I discussed in Chapter 16. He evoked his youth in a charming memoir that Mark Twain might have written if he had been born in Egypt.[1] His description is not a eulogy, as he clearly sees the inhabitants' failings, but it seems to me that he never completely lost his affection for the simple, uncluttered, and wholesome life of his youth.

From the village, Qutb moved to the great city of Cairo, where, after graduating from a secular school, he lived on the fringes of the talented, vivacious, but frustrated Egyptian intelligentsia. During his twenties and thirties, he wrote a novel and gained a small reputation as a literary critic in Cairo's periodicals. Insofar as he thought about politics in this early phase of his life, he followed many Egyptian intellectuals in visualizing his country as a separate nation or *watan*. For them and for him, Egypt stood aloof as the heir to a great and ancient civilization. If it had a role to play in the Middle East, it was as a sort of missionary, bringing its superior culture to the attention of the backward, "oriental" Arabs. Some, notably the doyen of the literary set in Cairo, Taha Husain, proclaimed that Egypt was not part of the Arab world or even the Muslim world but rather part of the multicultural Mediterranean world.[2] It differed from Greece and Italy mainly in that it had received God's gift to humankind, Islam. As the best of all possible worlds, it was superior, even if not recognized as such, to all other countries.

Like many Egyptians, Qutb was jerked out of his comfortable identification with ideal Egypt by contact with the Englishmen who flooded into actual Egypt during the Second World War. I have mentioned the crudities of soldier talk to which Egyptians were daily exposed. Their rudeness must have been as painful to him as it was to many Egyptians I have known. Writing five years after the war, he was still furious at the " 'contempt' of the Allied soldiers who 'ran over Egyptians in their cars like dogs.' "[3]

His sensitivity to the contempt shown by people of the North would be rubbed raw shortly after the war, when he was given a fellowship to study in America. To his village-trained eyes, America was repellent. It appeared to him a cesspool of wasteful consumption, exaggerated sex, and gross materialism. Putting together all he found to detest about America, he placed its culture in an Arab context: American society, he wrote, was like the pre-Islamic Arabian period of "ignorance [of God's way]," the *Jahaliyah,* which was reformed through the actions of God's Messenger, Muhammad. Viewed in this way, the loneliness he appears to have felt while living among Americans was not due to any failing on his part: he was a civilized man among barbarians, just as Muhammad had been a man of God among heathens. Thus he was able to categorize the West, not Egypt, as the retrograde society. Americans were like the British soldiers, self-assured and powerful but uncouth.

I have heard dozens of students from Iran, the Arab countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the Sudan say the similar things.[4] But students, in the tens of thousands, found compensating qualities in America that made them reluctant to return to their native lands. Qutb did not find compensating qualities. Such virtues as the Americans had struck him as bait in a trap. As he later saw it, the greatest danger to true belief was precisely the achievement of the modern Western world: Western "genius created its marvelous works in science, culture, law and material production, due to which mankind has progressed to great heights of creativity and material comfort. It is not easy to find fault with the inventor of such marvelous things, especially since what we call the 'world of Islam' is completely devoid of all this beauty."[5]

But Qutb was ambivalent about "all this beauty" because, on the one hand, it distracted people from living as God meant them to live—in austere circumstances—and diverted the spiritual quest they were meant to espouse; but, on the other hand, he believed that "in fact, material prosperity and scientific progress are encouraged by the teachings of Islam, as they pertain to man's role as the representative of God on earth." [6] He urged that Muslims emulate the progress of Western science and industry, but that they do it in a Muslim way.

Even doing so in a Muslim way, he warned, was dangerous because such activities create, perpetuate, and accentuate impiety, greed, materialism, and moral laxity. These he considered the characteristics of the North of the world and, indeed, of many societies of the South that superficially think of themselves as Muslim. The problem was to get the best of the West while rejecting its failings, and the solution he proposed was Islam. But he stressed that "Islam did not come to support people's desires, which are expressed in their concepts, institutions, modes of living, and habits and traditions. . . . Islam does not sanction the rule of selfish desires. It has come to abolish all such concepts, laws, customs, and traditions and to replace them with a new concept of human life, to create a new world on the foundations of submission to the Creator."[7]

To find a model that modern people could emulate, Qutb counsels his readers to go back to origins—in his terms, to the first generation of Muslims. He believed that this generation, guided by the sayings and actions of the Prophet and in accord with God's commands as set out in the Quran, led a "pure" religious life. We may compare Qutb's approach to that of the seventeenth-century Puritans in New England, a link that offers a key to the thought of many of the people known as fundamentalists.

The Arabic word for "fundamentalist" Islam is *salafiyah.* Even native Arabic speakers usually take it to mean "reactionary," but the concept is more complex. The word *salafi* in classical Arabic means "a person who stands both in the rear guard and in the vanguard"—Arabic is full of such contrasts. The logic of the apparent paradox was brought out by the teachings of the eighteenth-century jurisconsults who were searching for means to protect their civilization from the impact of the West. Some argued that "real" strength was not gained by copying Western practices but had to be derived from fundamentals, as laid out in the Quran and elucidated in the practices of the Prophet. Only on this firm base, they argued, could real progress be made: they had to go back in order to go forward. This is the essence of salafiyah.

What prevented them from finding the firm base and therefore caused their weakness, the fundamentalists believed, were the innovations and perversions that had encrusted Islamic thought and society in the long dark ages of its decline. Islam, many felt, had "lost its way" in the flood of sterile scholasticism and the introduction of alien ideas and practices.

I have already described the "purification" movements inspired by such men as the Arabian Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab, the Algerian/Libyan Muhammad bin Ali al-Sanusi, the Sudanese Muhammad Ahmad al-Mahdi, the Iranian activist Jamal al-Din al-

Afghani, and the Egyptian theologian Muhammad Abduh. This tradition lay at the heart of Qutb's thought.

The teachings and movements of these Muslims are not so exotic or "oriental" as they seem. They resembled those introduced in northern Europe by Martin Luther and John Calvin. The early Protestants shared with Muslim salafis a belief in the absolute authority of the unalterable word of God as set out in the original texts. To ensure a solid foundation, the Protestants and particularly the Puritans thought they had to put aside the vast body of scholastic writings and bypass the clerical bureaucracy that obscured the original faith. The task they assigned themselves was to discover the "pure" message and lead their followers to implement it. So it was for Muslim puritans.

For Qutb the bedrock of faith was God's message in the Quran and the sayings and doings of Muhammad during the thirteen years of his prophecy in Mecca and the ten years of his rule in Madinah. Qutb appeared to have been little interested in the long sweep of Muslim life in later centuries. Even the glorious memories of medieval Islam appeared to him as perversions. Islam was often tolerant of other faiths. Accommodating to Judaism, Hinduism, and other religions, it was not "pure." Protestant Puritans felt much the same about medieval Catholic and Orthodox Christians. Christian theologians, and particularly those in the Inquisition, were constantly trying to weed out heresies. Indeed, that was the purpose of the great domestic crusade, the so-called Albigensian Crusade (1209–1229). Summoned by Pope Innocent III and led by King Philip II, it aimed to exterminate the Cathar Christians in the southwest of what became France and led to the formation of the Inquisition.

None of these Christian or Muslim civilizations reached deeply into the mass of the people. For Qutb, the peasantry of Egypt was barely Muslim. As I read him to mean, uneducated or ill-informed people like the villagers among whom he grew up continued to practice customs and hold beliefs that had no basis in formal Islam. "Popular" Islam, not only in Egypt but from Morocco to Indonesia, was full of mythical beasts and votive practices that were more at home in *The Arabian Nights* than in the Quran.

Moreover, as aliens converted to Islam, they brought their customs with them, and some of these directly violated Quranic injunctions. For example, the Afghan, Chechen, Bedouin, and Berber custom of vengeance violated the Quranic injunction against believers killing believers; Afghan practice treated women's rights to inheritance differently from what Islamic law prescribed; the almost universal recitation of prayers at saints' tombs was a form of polytheism; and pilgrimage to shrines and "holy" cities competed with pilgrimage to Mecca. To the orthodox, the incorporation of aspects of

Zoroastrianism into Islam was the worst of all. To fundamentalists, Shiis were not true Muslims. All of the deviant practices were innovations (*bida*) and therefore illegal.

Also illegal was the centuries-long "softening" of religious practice. Both the Old Testament and the Quran reflected the values of primitive Hebrew and Arab tribal societies and set forth severe codes. The Old Testament aimed at preserving and enhancing tribal cohesion and power, while the Quran aimed to build a new society. Both early Judaism and early Islam were authoritarian theocracies that allowed no deviation. But, over the centuries, as both societies came to deal with diverse beliefs, they became more ecumenical and less strict.

However, particularly among some Christian sects—Old Believers, born-again Christians, and many Protestant sects—and comparable Muslim groups, "return" to the basics of the faith remained a powerful rallying call. In the eyes of the fundamentalists, "relaxation" amounted to perversion of God's commandments. Throughout history, such Christian theologians as Augustine and Dominic and such Muslim scholars as Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Hanbal and Taqi al-Din bin Taimiyah have sought to go back to the original or pure message. Qutb joined this parade.

These attempts at a return to fundamentals reached a large body of believers in Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and in the Middle East in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Old Testament–inspired New England Puritans and Quran-inspired Wahhabis implemented draconian, biblically or Quranically based legal codes, complete with lashings, burnings, and stoning to death for such crimes as adultery, sodomy, and blasphemy.

Shocked by the practices of the violent wing of Islam—as reformers in the West had been shocked by the violent wing of Christianity—and seeking to color religion in softer tones, some Muslims in what has been called "the liberal age" sought to defend Islam by dwelling on its glorious past, when Islam was thought to have been lightly held. Even if true, Qutb maintained, this was a perversion of God's ordinances, and he rejected it: "Woe to such a defense! Shame on such a defense!"[8] For him, the glories of the wars of conquest, the caliphates, and the flowering of Islamic culture were glosses on the essentials. What mattered was God's message as Muhammad lived it. "There is nothing in our Islam of which we are ashamed or anxious about defending: there is nothing in it to be smuggled to the people with deception. . . . A person who feels the need of defense, justification and apology is not capable of presenting Islam to people."[9]

Having disposed of those seeking to defend or excuse his religion, Qutb seeks to reassure those who observe that Muslim lands have lost the vitality and power of the great days. He writes, "Conditions

change, the Muslim loses his physical power and is conquered; yet the consciousness does not depart from him that he is the most superior. If he remains a Believer, he looks upon his conqueror from a superior position. He remains certain that this is a temporary condition which will pass away and that faith will turn the tide from which there is no escape. If death is his portion, he will never bow his head. Death comes to all, but for him there is martyrdom. He will proceed to the Garden [Heaven], while his conquerors will go to the Fire."[10] And here, as he often does, he backs up his statement by a quotation from the Quran: "Do not be dejected nor grieve. You shall be the uppermost if you are Believers" (Quran 3/139). Whatever the present condition, ultimate victory is inevitable.

But, all around him, he argued, were people who pretended to be guides but who had lost the way. They espoused false religions or even substituted for faith secular ideologies like nationalism. Nationalism, as personified in his Egypt by Gamal Abdel Nasser, was a perversion. It focused on materialism rather than on the spirit, on symbols rather than on substance, on immediate objectives rather than on eternity: "The homeland (watan) of the Muslim, in which he lives and which he defends, is not a piece of land; the nationality of the Muslim, by which he is identified, is not the nationality determined by a government; the family of the Muslim, in which he finds solace and which he defends, is not blood relationship; the flag of the Muslim which he honors and under which he is martyred, is not the flag of a country; and the victory of the Muslim, which he celebrates and for which he is thankful to God, is not military victory. It is what God has described: 'When God's help and victory comes, and thou seest people entering into God's religion in multitudes . . . [then will true victory be achieved]' [Quran 110/3]." And he proclaims, "Only this is Islam, and only this is Dar-ul-Islam [the Muslim's homeland]—not the soil, not the race, not the lineage, not the tribe, and not the family."[11]

Like other prophets and revolutionaries, Qutb was annoyed by those he thought had misread his message. The traditions (*hadiths*) relating to the Prophet Muhammad are filled with refutations of what he regarded as spurious charges or misinterpretations. When, during his two years studying and traveling in America, Qutb encountered students and scholars who professed to understand Islam and Islamic culture, he was angered by what he regarded as their willful misunderstanding. He was particularly annoyed by the supposed experts, the orientalists. He inveighs against the "treacherous orientalists [who] have painted a picture of Islam as a violent movement which imposed its belief upon people by the sword. These vicious orientalists know very well that this is not true, but by this

method they try to distort the true motives of Islamic jihad. . . . Islam is the way of life ordained by God for all mankind [and] jihad in Islam is simply a name for striving to make this system of life dominant in the world. As far as belief is concerned, it clearly depends upon personal opinion, under the protection of a general system in which all obstacles to freedom of personal belief have been removed."[12]

Qutb was often charged with advocating tyranny, and those inspired by him have certainly acted viciously and tyrannically, as I will show in Part 5. There is much in his writing that encouraged this tendency, and he is taken to be the philosopher of the Muslim revolt. But he maintained that "it is not the intention of Islam to force its beliefs on people. . . . Islam is a declaration of the freedom of man from servitude to other men. Thus it strives from the beginning to abolish all those systems and governments which are based on the rule of man over men and the servitude of one human being to another. When Islam releases people from this political pressure and presents to them its spiritual message, appealing to their reason, it gives them complete freedom to accept or not to accept their beliefs. However, this freedom does not mean that they can make their desires their gods, or that they can choose to . . . [make] some men lords over others. Whatever system to be established in the world ought to be on the authority of God, deriving its laws from Him alone."[13]

To summarize, it seems to me that Qutb argues within a closed and esoteric system. His "milestones" are along a road that, as he suggests, cannot be clearly seen by those who do not tread it. Nor, implicitly, can it be evaluated by outsiders. While he admits that "Europe's creative mind is far ahead in this area [material inventions] and at least for a few centuries to come we cannot expect to compete," this is irrelevant.[14] It is a judgment based on factors that are not a part of the Islamic paradigm. Mankind's essential task is to follow the milestones toward salvation. Nothing else really matters. A person cannot understand this basic notion unless or until he already believes: the "Quran does not open its treasures except to him who accepts it with this spirit: the spirit of knowing with the intention of acting upon it."[15] Belief—that is, entry into the paradigm—must precede rational justification. It was precisely their reversal of this sequence, the practice or academic study first and belief later, that "made later generations different from the first unique generation of Islam."[16] The early Muslims, he asserted, threw themselves into Islam because belief was already in their hearts. As he said, in our times, "Islam addresses only those people who in principle have already submitted themselves to its authority and have repudiated all other rules and regulations . . . [who] accept the Shariah without any question and reject all other laws in any shape or form. This is Islam. . . . There is no other

meaning of Islam."[17]

Secular governments, even those whose leaders thought of themselves as Muslims, took Qutb's sermons and writings as an implicit declaration of war. He told them that their ordinances were not to be obeyed and their institutions were not to be honored. They were declared outlaws and, as disbelievers, were legally to be killed. Some were. Egyptian prime minister Nuqrashi Pasha was assassinated in 1948 just days after he outlawed the Muslim Brotherhood, an attempt was made on President Nasser's life in 1961, and President Anwar Sadat was shot to death in 1981. True believers had their own, extragovernmental code to which they gave total loyalty and that was impervious to control, or even evaluation, by outsiders or outside systems.

But a "moderate" Muslim might reasonably ask the question that Jesus is said to have asked: Could not a believer "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is God's?"[18] No, Qutb held, because it is "Caesar" who is the enemy. With secular governments implementing what he regarded as spurious ideologies—capitalism, socialism, and communism—there could be no sharing. There could be no compromise even with governments and institutions that proclaimed themselves Muslim but that, in Qutb's terms, were mere façades masking idolatry. To him, it was not so important that they were the puppets of imperialism, but it was of supreme importance that he considered them disbelievers (*kafirs*). Such puppet regimes, he charged, were the worst because they concealed the reality that the modern Muslim community "is buried under the debris of the man-made traditions of several generations [that have passed since the first generation of the Prophet's community] and is crushed under the weight of those false laws and customs which are not even remotely related to the Islamic teachings, and which, in spite of all this, calls itself the 'world of Islam.' "[19]

In response to the frequently asked question, Can Islam be "reformed" to meet the needs and values of the modern world? Qutb had to answer no. He believed Islam is the way of God, as laid down in the Quran and practiced by the Prophet, and there could be no justification for reform. Indeed, reform itself is a perversion, a deviation from God's way. Liberal or modernizing Muslim leaders like Egypt's chief judge Muhammad Abduh in the early twentieth century, the acolyte of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani, were not guides but deceivers. Regardless of their intent, the effect of their actions was to lead Islam astray.

Another question Muslims have tried to answer is whether modernization—which is really just a politically correct way of saying "Westernization"—is the way forward. Again Qutb's answer was no.

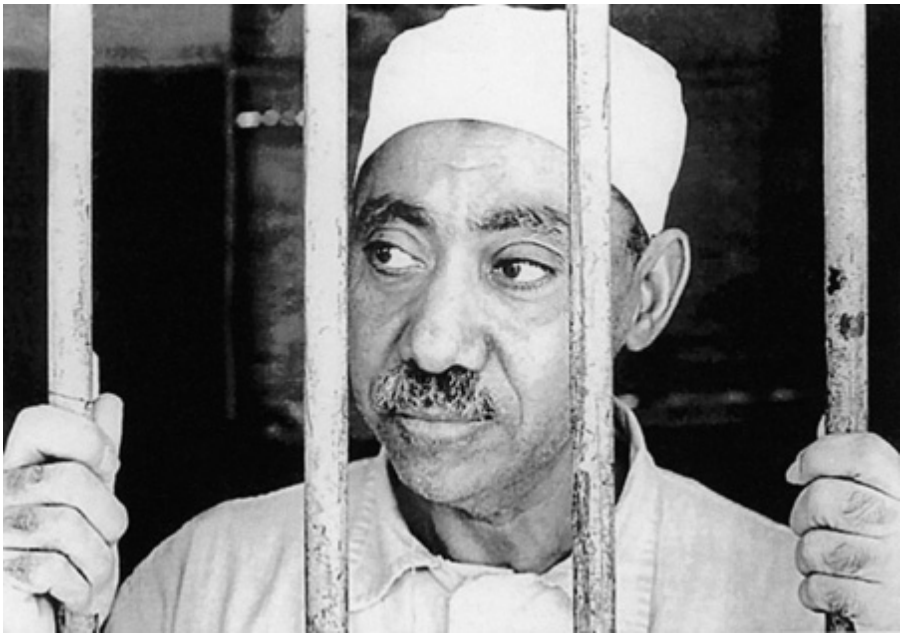
It was obvious that Muslim societies are now weak and must find their way to dignity and strength. But whereas the secularists wanted to forget the past and rush into Western-style modernity, Qutb argued that the West had little to offer. Admittedly, it had grand material accomplishments, but in its blind race toward materialism, Western society had lost sight of what well-being really means. In his view, it is the turn away from spirituality that is the great failing of Western culture. It is not just that a life without spirituality is barren—which he believed—but that it loses the coherence of a divinely created and God-mandated system. Attempts to make up for incoherence by building armies, engaging in public works projects, adopting political ideologies, and creating institutions would not bring strength and dignity. On this point he was certainly right, and this failure is a major part of the incentive for the rise of radical Islam today. It is, of course, a simplistic view of history to ascribe the defeats suffered by Muslims to ideology alone, but the events of the 1950s and later years convinced many angry and frightened men to listen to his message.

True religious life, in which God's commands determine humankind's fate, can be found in a pure form only in early Islam. This was the essential point in Qutb's thought. He was a great simplifier. Often his points come down just to repetition of the Muslim credo "There is no god but God." The basis of his thought is that if Muslims had really believed and lived by the credo, they could not have been defeated. Since God is all powerful, disparities in armaments, wealth, education, health, and all the other criteria that differentiate the North from the South are irrelevant. This belief lies at the heart of the radical and violent Muslim movements we see today.

And Qutb went one step further: he borrowed from the Quran the terms on which Muslim could legally engage in armed struggle and what I have called violent politics. As always, he based this on the sayings of Muhammad regarding the experience of the first Muslims and passages in the Quran: "Fight in the cause of God those who fight against you [that is, defend yourselves], but do not initiate hostilities. Verily God does not love aggressors. But [if such people are the aggressors,] kill them wherever you encounter them and expel them from where they had expelled you, because tyranny is more insufferable than fighting. . . . And fight them to the death until subversion is no more and the religion of God is established. But if they surrender, do not attack any but the evil doers."[20]

This battle cry was memorized, along with the rest of the Quran, in daily classes by millions of young students (*taliban*) in tens of thousands of religious schools all over the Islamic world. Today this and similar verses are essentially the jihadis' marching orders. They are the proclamation of war by the Muslim South against the North

and its agents and proxies. Defense is not only legal and moral; it is obligatory, but attack is illegal. This division suggests a Muslim basis for ceasefire, and ultimately for peace: God's order to Muslims is to defend themselves but not to initiate hostilities.



The Egyptian Sayyid Qutb, a devout fundamentalist, was an inspiration for the Muslim revolt against the North. His sermons and commentaries on the Quran were read by millions. Accused of sedition in Egypt, he was tried and hanged in 1966 by the determinedly secular regime of President Gamal Abdel Nasser. Here, he is pictured in prison awaiting execution.

While Qutb was not a jihadi, he justified subversion of secular order. So, like his great predecessors Hanbal and Taimiyah, he was often imprisoned. To the leaders of the Arab states, what he preached sounded as subversive as communism sounded to the American leadership in the 1950s and 1960s. Moreover, in the politics of his time, Qutb's ideas were a direct attack on the Arab nationalism promoted by the Egyptian leader Nasser. For his virtual declaration of war on Nasser's government and ideology, Qutb was put into prison, tried, condemned, and, in 1966, at age sixty, hanged. But his ideas did not die with him. Qutb remains today the philosopher of the Islamic revolution.

CHAPTER 34

Palestine: Wars, Diaspora, and Failed State

For the Palestinians, the 1948–1949 war was a catastrophe. Before the withdrawal of the British forces and during the fighting, some eight hundred thousand Palestinian villagers fled, were frightened into leaving, or were driven out by Israeli forces. In November 1948 the United Nations established an organization to keep them alive and to plan some sort of accommodation for them, but such programs take a long time to set up. Like the refugees in the contemporary partition of India and Syrian refugees today, most of them could carry little with them. Few even had blankets, and many, particularly the elderly and children, died each night in that year's unusually cold December. Even fewer had money or valuables to trade for food. In the critical first weeks, when they faced starvation, their only help came from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross Societies, and the American Friends Service Committee.

The organization the UN created was the Relief for Palestinian Refugees. After an American "expert" studied the possibility of their being absorbed into the economies of the surrounding Arab countries, this organization morphed into the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). The American consultant proposed to create a Middle Eastern labor shortage so that the refugees would be absorbed into the labor forces of the host countries.

The proposal made no practical sense: most of the refugees were traditional farmers, and without their lands they had no marketable skills. In the Arab areas to which they fled, farmers did not need their services or could use them only as seasonal laborers. In the cities, they would have had to compete for jobs with the already underemployed poor. In theory, the American plan might have alleviated some pain, but there was no hope that it would be funded or that it would work fast enough to solve the refugee problem.

It also made no sense politically. Both the refugees and their hosts understood that its intent was to denationalize the Palestinians. This

was anathema to both groups. The refugees clung to the UN General Assembly resolution 194 of December 11, 1948, which mandated their right to return to their homes or, if they so elected, to receive compensation. As long as the "right of return" was proclaimed, as the UN did repeatedly through the years, the refugees' plight could be regarded as temporary. Thus neither they nor their hosts wanted them to merge with local labor forces. Accepting assimilation would be admitting the utter defeat of all that Arab nationalism proclaimed. It would also destroy Palestine as a nation.

In this, as in so many things, the story of the Palestinians remarkably recalled the Zionist experience. The threat to their nation by merger into another population had been one of the early Zionists' great fears. From his safe haven in America, Justice Louis Brandeis warned Jews that assimilation was national suicide. Neither the Jews nor the Palestinians were willing to commit suicide.

Meanwhile, wealthy, technically trained, or lucky refugees managed to reach safe havens in Kuwait, Baghdad, Cairo, London, and New York. Some became successful businessmen, many found positions in academic institutions, and others virtually built the emerging economies of Kuwait and other principalities on the Gulf. In the aggregate these men and women possibly totaled nearly one-tenth of the Palestinian population; the other nine-tenths existed in a "deplorable material and moral situation."[1] The UN agency charged with keeping them alive was allowed to spend just $27 a year on each person's medical care, food, shelter, and clothing. If purchased on the local market, the monthly food ration would have cost about $1.80 per person. It provided a daily intake of 1,600 calories—enough to keep the recipients from starving, but not more.

Shelter was a bigger problem. The lucky refugees were issued tents, and a few found abandoned buildings, which they divided into sleeping areas by hanging cloth drapes from the ceilings. Those who found neither tents nor old buildings slept in the open or else under lean-tos. Some managed to build huts of cast-off tin cans or various sorts of scrap. But regardless of the building materials, they could no longer retain modesty or privacy. To stay alive, they had to give up the customs of their society and descend into the "deplorable material and moral situation" the UN had found.[2]

Inexorably and quickly most refugees were driven down into what Karl Marx called the *lumpenproletariat,* or what he elsewhere described as an "indefinite, disintegrated mass." No longer parts of a nation or even a village, they were just families—and even families were often reduced in the panic of exodus to lone individuals. Little groups did what they had never before done: they shared beds, board, and latrines with strangers.

Even before the exodus, the Palestinians had never developed a national identity. Like people throughout the South, they identified with the villages where they lived. It was the watan that was their nation. In their village communities, they married, determined how much each had to pay to the common pot to satisfy the agents of the distant government, kept the peace, plowed their fields, distributed among their lands such irrigation water as they had, educated the young, tended the sick, and buried the dead. As much as they could, they avoided contact with the government, whether the Ottoman Empire or the British mandate.

During the mandate, the traditional pattern of life had begun to change, faster in the cities and slower or only partially in the villages. The mandate government employed significant numbers of the educated urban elite, and, as increasing numbers of Jewish settlers arrived, some rural Palestinians worked for them. But overall, Palestinians had few daily contacts with either the British or the Zionists. Those who did often grew apprehensive or hostile to them. Some supported the 1936–1939 rebellion against the British. In response to that rebellion, the British army and police, aided by some five thousand Jewish paramilitary settlers whom they armed and officered, drove the leaders of the Arab community into exile, prison, or graves. From roughly 1936, there were no recognized national leaders among the Palestinians, and indeed no nation.

In 1937, the Zionist organization drew up a plan, codenamed “Plan A,” to force the Palestinians to leave. Prime Minister David Ben Gurion ordered it to be revised, and, after various changes, the program became known as “Plan C.” Then came “Plan D” (Hebrew: *Dalet*).[3]

As the Israeli journalist Benny Morris found in the Israeli state archives,

> Plan D provided for the conquest and permanent occupation, or levelling, of Arab villages and towns. It instructed that the Arab villages should be surrounded and searched for weapons and irregulars. In the event of resistance, the armed forces in the village should be destroyed and the inhabitants should be expelled from the state. . . . Some hostile villages . . . were to be destroyed [by] burning, demolition and mining the ruins.[4]

Villages were systematically infiltrated by agents, often Jews who had grown up in other Arab countries and who had been trained in espionage from 1944 at a school in Shefeya. Their task was to compile “lists of ‘wanted’ persons in each village. In 1948 Jewish troops used these lists for the search-and-destroy operations they carried out as soon as they had occupied a village. . . . The men who were picked out were often shot on the spot. Criteria for inclusion in these lists were involvement in the Palestinian national movement . . . [and even

such things as] 'known to have travelled to Lebanon.' "[5]

Each Jewish (there was as yet no Israel) commander was given a list of villages and neighborhoods that were to be destroyed and their inhabitants expelled. He was supplied with a map and a timetable and ordered to carry out the operations. Morris found in the government archives a note that was apparently typical: "The 22nd Battalion (Carmel Brigade) orders to its troops were 'to kill every (adult male) Arab encountered' and to set alight with firebombs 'all objectives that can be set alight.' " [6] As the Israeli historian Ilan Pappe discovered, the International Committee of the Red Cross also found that the water supply of the Arab city of Acre was injected with typhoid germs.[7]

As attack followed attack, the Palestinians had no leaders to guide them, no way to express themselves, and no system of civic organization. They were preconditioned for defeat. Then came the war's most widely publicized act of terrorism, the slaughter of the villagers in Deir Yasin. It created a shock wave—what the perpetrators called "the atrocity factor"—throughout the land. Morris wrote that Deir Yasin "probably had the most lasting effect of any single event of the war in precipitating the flight of Arab villagers from Palestine. . . . After a prolonged firefight, in which Arab family after family were slaughtered," the Jewish terrorist groups, the Irgun and Lehi (acting, he says, with the "reluctant, qualified consent of the Haganah commander in Jerusalem"), "rounded up many of the remaining villagers who included militiamen and unarmed civilians of both sexes, and children, and murdered dozens of them. Altogether some 250 Arab, mostly non-combatants, were murdered; there were also cases of mutilation and rape."[8]

Pappe quotes one survivor, a boy who was then twelve years old, who recalled the events of the day: "They took us out one after the other; shot an old man and when one of his daughters cried, she was shot too. Then they called my brother Muhammad, and shot him in front of us, and when my mother yelled, bending over him—carrying my little sister Hudra in her hands, still breastfeeding her—they shot her too."[9]

The boy was lined up against a wall with other Arab children and also shot, but he survived to tell the tale of Deir Yasin.

The Israeli government was determined that the Palestinians never return. In what they often called "creating facts on the ground," they destroyed 561 of the 700 villages in what became Israel and emptied eleven urban neighborhoods.[10] General Moshe Dayan later frankly described the program to a group of Jewish students: "We came here to a country that was populated by Arabs and we are building here a Hebrew, a Jewish state; instead of the Arab villages, Jewish villages were established. . . . There is not a single Jewish settlement that was

not established in the place of a former Arab Village."[11]

Yitzhak Shamir, who would later become the Israeli prime minister and who then was head of the terrorist organization Lehi, had ordered the murder of the senior British representative in the Middle East in the midst of the Second World War, in 1942, and ordered the murder of the special representative of the secretary general of the United Nations, Count Folke Bernadotte, in 1948.[12] He played a major role in carrying out Plan D.

Plan D left a legacy of hatred that resembled what the founders of Israel felt for the Germans, but they never seemed to realize that it was also felt by the Arabs. As Shamir wrote of his memories of the Jewish Holocaust, in words that many a victim of the Arab holocaust might have echoed, "I cannot forget and will not forgive." Certainly in Shamir's memory was the destruction of the village of Lidice by the Nazis in retaliation for the assassination of SS Obergruppebführer Reinhard Heydrich. Memories of the brutal and tragic events that both the Jews and the Palestinians have experienced have been formative for their nationhood. And those experiences included not only torture, death, and destruction but also expulsion. Like the European refugees among whom Shamir had lived, the Palestinians became displaced persons (DPs).

When the Palestinian DPs hobbled—often with children on their backs and carrying what little they managed to retrieve from their houses—into Lebanon, Syria, Transjordan, and Gaza (then under Egyptian administration), they were first greeted with pity. But pity quickly turned to hostility. The Palestinians' very presence reminded the governments and peoples of the other Arab countries that they had failed in their loudly and repeatedly proclaimed intent to protect Palestine. Each refugee seemed to every person he met like a finger pointing at him and shaming him. And, as they recovered their voice, the Palestinians were lavish in their condemnation of other Arabs. Moreover, while the Palestinians and their hosts were seen by outsiders as undifferentiated "Arabs," they saw themselves as Muslims or Christians, Sunnis or Shiis, or Catholics, Orthodox, or Protestants; people of this village or that; or Lebanese or Syrians. Those are the terms by which they traditionally identified themselves, and they were foreigners to one another.

More pointedly, as people are wont to do, the other Arabs sought to excuse themselves by blaming others. They often blamed the victims. In conversations and in the press, they accused the Palestinians of venality for having sold their land or cowardice for not fighting for it. Even when they tried to be welcoming, they were shocked that the Palestinians were so many.[13] That this is a common attitude toward refugees was made clear by the attitude of Europeans toward the

Jewish DPs in Europe in 1945 and toward Syrian and other refugees in 2015 and 2016. Refugees are nearly always disliked. They are accused of spreading disease (which they probably do, as they often lack adequate protection from the weather), of stealing (which no doubt some do, as they are hungry), and of taking jobs away from natives (which they would like to do, as they are desperate). No one knew then what to do with the Palestinians, just as today no one knows to what to do with the Syrian refugees.

The dilemma of the Palestinian refugees has remained unsolved for over half a century.[14] Two, sometimes three, generations of Palestinians have grown to maturity in UN refugee camps, never having known "normal" life.

There is here, as there is so often in "the Palestine problem," a useful biblical allusion. When Moses led his group of refugees out of Egypt, they were a dispirited rabble, "strangers in a strange land." Moses kept them in the wilderness for forty years, two generations, to purge them of their servile ways. The Palestinians' "wilderness" was to be the camps. Life there was barren, sources of pleasure were far away, and even memories of former days faded. All physical features were both strange and minimal. Idleness caused a dry rot in adults and stultified the young. Then a reaction set in. The camps became cauldrons in which a new people was being slowly forged.

These cauldrons were fired by a blend of exaggerated memories and unrealistic hopes. With nothing to do, indeed often not being allowed to do anything, people had plenty of time to dwell on the disaster. Anger began to replace listlessness. Former strangers formed new "villages" within the camps, and new leaders began to emerge. There was as yet no sense of nationalism, but two experiences began to push the disorganized refugees toward a sense of nationhood.

The first was sharing. The refugees did not know much about the past; few of them had read the press or kept diaries or notes, but each person knew what had happened to him or her. As people sat together and exchanged memories, they began to realize that they shared a "holocaust" (*nabka*). As among the Jewish DPs in Europe, this sharing of a common experience crystallized a sense of union. Individual experiences accumulated into a shared narrative. For both peoples, it was exodus.

The second shared experience was their reaction to holocaust: terrorism. Jews were determined to become powerful. In my visits to Palestine before the 1948 war, I often heard scathing comments about the impotence of European Jews who had walked into death camps. They were determined never to show any signs of weakness again. Those I met and all I heard about would have agreed with such of their leaders as Ben Gurion, Shamir, Dayan, and Golda Meir that there

must be a “muscular Zionism.” This sentiment gave rise to groups like the Palmah, Irgun, and Lehi. It was the basis of Plan D, and of ruthless terrorist operations first against the British and then against the Palestinians. In these attacks thousands of men, women, and children were killed, their houses were bombed or burned, and their way of life was destroyed.

These attacks and the ensuing ethnic cleansing are a reality that Northerners have long denied but that Southerners have long known.[15] They shaped the attitudes on which Arabs tried to act. Because it has been so little discussed, so often denied, and so formative for subsequent events, I will touch here on a few of the hundreds of events that have been the subject of conversations day after day, month after month, year after year among Palestinians.

During the 1948–1949 war, in the second wave of attacks that were “primarily designed to break Arab morale,” on April 22, 1948, the Haganah fired mortars into Haifa’s market square, in which a “great crowd” had gathered. British army officers observed that “during the morning they [the Haganah] were continually shooting down all Arabs who moved. . . . This included completely indiscriminate and revolting machinegun fire and sniping on women and children [who were] attempting to get out of Haifa. . . . There was considerable congestion outside the East Gate [of the port] of hysterical and terrified Arab women and children and old people on whom the Jews opened up mercilessly with fire.”[16]

Judging that Plan D was not draconian enough, Israeli authorities decided to destroy Palestinian villages whether or not they were resisting the Israeli advance. As Yitzhak Pundak, later a general and commander of the Israeli armored corps, told the Israeli newspaper *Haaretz* fifty-six years after the attack, in 2004, “There were two hundred villages [in his sector] and these are gone. We had to destroy them, otherwise we would have had Arabs here. . . . We would have had another million Palestinians.”[17] Memories of scores of similar events were constantly revived, discussed, and compared in the camps. They formed the agenda of adult education and were passed to the avidly listening children.

The actions called for in Plan D were echoed by events after the exodus of the Palestinians from what became Israel. One group of such incidents began in March 1949. The governments of Israel and Jordan reached an agreement that required the Jordanians, as some of the Palestinian villagers had become, to pull back about three kilometers all along the armistice line. That left the villages in Jordan but placed their farmlands in Israel. This was not only a severe economic blow to the villagers, effectively depriving them of most of their income and food supply, but it also infuriated them to see Israeli

settlers harvesting the crops they had planted. Dispossessed farmers began slipping across the border at night to get what they had left behind or pick their olives. As they did, the Israelis began to defend their newly acquired lands.

As a then member of the Israeli Parliament later recalled, it was not just settlers who were involved. The army chief for the area (nicknamed Gandhi)

> took part in many manhunts. . . . These manhunts became a kind of sport. Arabs from the West Bank, who had fled across the Jordan River during the war, were trying to return home at night. Many were caught in army ambushes. The front commander was not supposed to be there, but Gandhi enjoyed it too much to stay away. He even invited his civilian friends—actors, song-writers and other bohemians—to join him in his helicopter. Those captured were killed on the spot.[18]

In April 1949, recognizing that such clashes might negate the armistice, the United Nations established mixed armistice commissions to investigate them. Each three-person commission included an official representative of Israel and an officer from one of the Arab governments. The chairman was a UN official, frequently an American officer. Since the conclusions of the Israelis and Arabs were predetermined, it was the decision of the chairman that counted. From the Palestinians' viewpoint, however, all this was irrelevant. They were not a government and had no state; they were not represented in the commissions and probably were not even aware of their actions. They were just farmers who believed that they owned the land the Israelis had taken. The commissions could document incidents—there were thousands—but could not stop them.

What had started in a local and individual way escalated. Guns began to be used on both sides, both Israelis and Palestinians were shot, and both increasingly demanded vengeance. This was the first stage in a sequence that evolved over half a century.

During those years, as clashes escalated, what had begun as a private initiative began to involve Arab governments. The Syrians and the Egyptians in particular began to supply arms and direct groups of partisans to attack Israeli targets. For the first time, the Palestinians themselves began to organize. Their first resistance movement, an attempt to create a new kind of nation in arms, was known as Fatah.[19]

The origins of Fatah, like those of all resistance movements, seem in retrospect almost casual. Like other movements I have described, it began with a small discussion group. In Gaza in 1954, a Palestinian engineer by the name of Yassir (also spelled Yasser) Arafat took the lead. He had been inspired by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood but, as far as I can tell, both he and his colleagues had only two major opinions: that Israel was the enemy, and that the Arab governments

would not or could not regain Palestine. He threw himself into the task of creating an organization, recruiting members, raising money, and acquiring arms. With Palestine gone and both Jordan and Egypt hostile to his initiative,[20] he reached out to groups all over the Arab world and even to Arab students in Europe and America, recruiting members for his organization. Cells were set up in Kuwait and among Arab students in West Germany, and training was started in Algeria.

What Arafat was trying to do was seen by others as subversive. Not only the governments of the Arab states but also their agreed representative of the Palestinians, the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), which had been founded by the Arab governments in 1964, felt under attack. The PLO was regarded by the Palestinians as a fraud and the peculations of its officials were common knowledge. As the French observer Gérard Chaliand wrote, the organization "was conceived as a method of controlling the Palestinian problem."[21] The organization was turned over to an old-fashioned diplomat who was given to the meaningless talk that the Palestinians were coming to despise. The PLO, under his leadership, did little in the following years, except to offer an alternative to Fatah.

Fatah's fortunes changed after the 1967 war, in which the conventional armies of the Arab states were smashed.[22] Fatah's leaders decided that guerrilla warfare was their only remaining option. They had no effective nation but had come to believe that the struggle itself would create it. Meetings among governments, eloquent resolutions, and reform of existing organizations were just froth, they proclaimed. It was armed struggle that mattered. It was to be "the road to Arab unity."[23] Thus, *qawmiyah,* or pan-Arab nationalism, would not be the *cause* of unity but rather the *result* of its achievement through armed struggle. The Palestinians thought the armed struggle would bring a battle that would be, in slogans that were often repeated, "fateful, decisive, dreadful and ruinous." It would be the caldron in which all the impurities of Arab societies would be melted away.

Impurities in Arab society were both glaring and widely discussed. Disunity led the list, closely followed by corruption. President Gamal Abdel Nasser, who found corruption infuriating, had begun his presidency fighting it domestically but then also found it to be pervasive among Arab leaders. As he told his closest confidants in a top-secret session of the Supreme Executive Committee on November 12, 1968, "It seems Moshe Dayan has said privately that they [Israeli intelligence] know the price of every Arab leader in the region . . . except for Abdel Nasser whose price they have not found out yet."[24]

Then, after their massive defeat in the 1967 war, the Arab states

found a role for Fatah. As Nasser told the Egyptian Council of Ministers on February 18, 1968, Egypt needed "to gain time for military preparation."[25] Nasser, the other Arab leaders, and the Russians were all convinced that Israel would strike again, and the Russians warned the Egyptian president that he lacked sufficient strength to defend his country. Nasser also said he had information indicating a large-scale, heavily financed, covert American attempt to overthrow his government. He welcomed a UN peace initiative led by Gunner Jarring and also sought to use the Palestinians to distract Israel. In his words, "At this stage we must also carry out operations with the *fedayeen* in the occupied territories, and I have agreed with the military commander of the Fatah Organisation [Arafat] on aid and coordination. I have information indicating that the Israelis are very disturbed by the *fedayeen* operations in the occupied territories, since around fifteen people are being killed every week, and this hurts the Israelis a great deal."[26]

By 1968, the ceasefire lines had become free-fire zones. Along the Suez Canal, Egyptian cities were being destroyed and Israeli soldiers were dying. Both the Israelis and the Egyptians wanted the situation to end. Elsewhere, particularly in Jordan, Israel's punitive raids did not stop the attacks, but the Palestinians were becoming aware that the pinpricks of individual terrorists or small resistance groups were not advancing their cause.[27] Nationhood seemed as far away as ever.

Fatah was one of at least a dozen separate groups that arose among the Palestinians, each claiming to be the national guerrilla army. Recruiting had become easier as the 1967 war had turned an additional 350,000 Palestinians into refugees. In 1968, 1,375,915 of them were registered with UNRWA. A new generation of "pure refugee" had come of age. Then came an electrifying event. In March 1968, with the reluctant support of Jordan, Fatah fought the first large-scale battle with Israeli forces at the village of Karameh. It was only a momentary success for the Palestinians, but it enabled Arafat to take over the PLO and combine it with Fatah to form a sort of nomadic nation in arms as a new Palestine.

Fatah drew its inspiration from the Algerian war, in which the native population forced the exodus of the European *colons.* So the tactics used in Algeria were seen as the key to victory. As the Palestinians leaders pointed out to their followers and to foreign observers, fewer than 13,000 armed Algerians had defeated 485,000 French troops who were armed by the United States and aided by a million *colons.* The story was on every Palestinian's lips. When I visited Amman in 1970, all the Palestinians I knew were wearing Algerian uniforms, quoting Algerian leaders, and reading Algerian press releases. For the Palestinians, Algeria was a blinding model.

Indeed, the model was blinding. Fatah and other Palestinian leaders totally misread the Algerian war. First, whereas in Algeria a native Arab and Berber population remained on the ground, there were no longer any Palestinian militants in Israel. Second, in Algeria, the French government had slowly but surely become sensitive to the growing worldwide criticism of its use of torture and application of apartheid. No such tide of opinion affected the Israelis. Largely because of the Holocaust, European political leaders could not oppose Zionist action, no matter what form it took, whereas no holocaust had given cover to the *colons* in Algeria. Not only had they not suffered under the Nazis, they had even thrived under the collaborationist Vichy government. And, third, the idea that the Algerian army had defeated France was also a misreading of events. It was not the Algerian army that defeated the French; that army, stationed out of harm's way in Morocco, never fought a single battle. All of the fighting was done by small bands of guerrillas and terrorists inside the country. That was something the Palestinians had never been able to do.

The real father of Algerian independence was France's president Charles de Gaulle. He got the French and the *colons* out of Algeria. And no Charles de Gaulle was available for the Palestinians. The Algerian model did not work for them.

In 1970, the Palestinians did not want to hear that message. But they did hearken to another message from the war there: the Algerians had a place to stand. They had a land. The landless Palestinians realized that they needed a base.

A land was at hand—identified, ironically, by the early Zionists. They had maintained that the land east of the Jordan River was really Palestine and that the British had wrongly separated it. The Palestinian leadership adopted that argument. A large part of the population of what had come to be called Jordan was made up of Palestinian refugees. The PLO and the dozen or so militant groups of Palestinians began to realize that Jordan might give them what they lacked: a territory.[28] That idea was, in broad terms, what the early Zionists had thought about Palestine: "a land without a people for a people without a land." The Jordanian government saw resident Palestinians as Jordanians, while the PLO saw Jordan as at least potentially Palestine.

So, in 1970, the PLO tried to effect this transformation. One of the militant groups tried to assassinate King Husain in June. The capital city of Amman began to look like an armed camp. To most observers' surprise, the king accepted the PLO's demands. Their leaders began to think that they had Jordan in their grasp, but then they overplayed their hand. Palestinian guerrillas, many of whom had never engaged

in guerrilla activity, swaggered through the streets dressed in fancy new Algerian army–style uniforms in front of unsmiling and drably dressed Jordanian army bedouin. The contrast was too strong for either to tolerate: to the Palestinians, the bedouin were military props for a reactionary regime compromised by deals with the Israelis; to the bedouin, the Fatah "troops" were just fancy city boys playing soldier.

The event that triggered the inevitable confrontation was not caused by the PLO but rather by one of its semiautonomous components, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. It commandeered two of Amman's hotels and took the guests hostage; then it hijacked and destroyed four civilian aircraft.[29] The aim was to capture the attention of the world press. That had been the Algerians' principal objective in the Battle of Algiers. Both groups, like many others before and after, hoped that this spectacular "wake-up call," as some described it, would force outside powers to consider their claims. Thus, in the first days of September 1970, the guerrilla movement found itself precariously balanced on what it thought was the crest of success.

It quickly fell off the edge. What is known among the Palestinians as "Black September" began on September 15 when King Husain instructed his army chiefs to reimpose the state's authority. The mainly bedouin army jumped at the chance. For the next ten days it bombarded the old town in Amman, where many of the Palestinians lived, and swept through the refugee camps, killing about ten thousand people. The PLO lost "its land." Under the aegis of President Nasser, PLO chairman Arafat signed a truce with King Husain.

Humiliated, frightened, and furious, Fatah and other groups retaliated as best they could. They assassinated the Jordanian prime minister and murdered eleven members of the Israeli Olympic team in Munich, while a Japanese group acting in their support struck Lod Airport in Israel. Driven from Jordan, Fatah decamped for the only other refuge it could reach, Lebanon, where about three hundred thousand Palestinian refugees awaited them in trepidation. They had reason to worry. Hot after the PLO, they feared, would come the Israeli army. It did.

Meanwhile, the Syrians watched the Lebanese events with special concern. Lebanon was their major outlet to the Mediterranean. Economically, it was vital to Syria; politically and emotionally, it was almost as important. Every Syrian ruler since the end of the First World War had believed Lebanon was legally part of Syria, regardless of what the French and British imperialists had decided. They also feared that Lebanon could be used again, as it had been used in 1919, as a springboard for an invasion of Syria. If Lebanon could not be

amalgamated into Syria, Syrian president Hafez al-Assad was determined that it be at least stable.

In Assad's view, however right their cause, the Palestinians were a destabilizing factor. In reaction to them, the minority communities in Lebanon were building militias, bringing constant turmoil and splitting the country apart. Assad also worried about the reaction of the Israelis, whom he hated and feared, to growing Palestinian anti-Israeli activity. The Palestinians had the ability to provoke a war with Israel in which Syria would be severely hurt economically and would likely be invaded. He knew that his own army could not defeat the Israelis, and he was certain the Palestinians could not. So he staked out a policy that avoided the Palestinian nation and its quasi-governing body, the PLO, and sought to pacify the Lebanese armed factions. At the request of the Lebanese president, Assad's army occupied much of northern Lebanon in 1976.

The PLO had already been authorized to operate and maintain an armed presence in the huge refugee camps, which had become virtual cities. By 1976, the Palestinians, who then amounted to about 15 percent of the Lebanese population, seemed poised to take over the country.

Neither the Israelis nor the Syrians were willing to let this happen. The Palestinians had been launching guerrilla attacks on Israel from Lebanese territory, and the Israelis had repeatedly struck back. Since their actions did not stop the Palestinians, they tried a different scheme: they identified a dissident Lebanese army officer and funded and armed him to create an autonomous province along the Israeli-Lebanese border to block Palestinian guerrilla activities. It did not quite work. In the first days of March 1978, a Palestinian guerrilla group carried out a raid on Israel in which a number of Israelis were killed. On March 15, the Israeli army invaded south Lebanon. (I will deal with the effects of this invasion in Chapter 35.)

Dreary but inconclusive events followed. At least one, in 1981, brought the Israelis and Syrians to the brink of war. During that period, Minister of Defense (later Prime Minister) Ariel Sharon formulated a policy to completely destroy the PLO. As the former mayor of Jerusalem Meron Benvenisti wrote of Sharon's plan, "The true objective . . . was the destruction of the powerful political and intellectual center of Palestinian nationalism that had developed over the years in Beirut."[30] The full text of the so-called Sharon Plan was soon published in both Jerusalem and Washington.[31]

Sharon's plan envisaged the removal of the PLO leadership, as Sharon told *Time* magazine on June 21, 1982, and the demoralization of the Palestinians living in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, and Syria, as well as Lebanon. It also sought to "encourage" the Palestinians on the

West Bank to leave their homes and move to Jordan, which Sharon described as the "Palestinian state." Sharon told former US undersecretary of state George Ball, as Ball testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in August, that his strategy was to "squeeze" the Palestinians out of the West Bank. Such a move not only would make it available for Israeli settlement but would also plunge Jordan into chaos, creating an opportunity for Israel to install a government that would make peace. The only remaining "frontline state" would be Syria, which would have to do as Israel required or be smashed. Saudi Arabia, vulnerable and backward, would accommodate. Israel would emerge as the dominant power in the Middle East. In effect, as Sharon was deputized by the Israeli government to deal with its immediate and long-term security objectives, his plan was to the Israeli government what *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* was to the American government: guidance for current and future action.[32]

Implicit in Sharon's plan was the need to drive the Palestinian "nation" out of the Middle East. If it were implemented, the PLO would not find anywhere in the region a "homeland," as the early Zionists used the word *heimstatt,* to which to return. They would have to accept assimilation, the same fate that Brandeis had warned the early Zionists would destroy their nation.

On June 6, 1982, six months after Sharon's plan became public, the Israeli army invaded Lebanon.

By Middle Eastern standards, the invasion was massive. Israeli troops overran the peacekeeping force the UN had established, and when the UN Security Council unanimously passed a resolution demanding Israeli withdrawal, the Israelis ignored it. Outside Beirut, the Israelis ran over the Syrian army while Israeli aircraft shot down about fifty Syrian aircraft.

The US government voted for the first Security Council resolution, demanding that Israeli stop, but vetoed a follow-up resolution condemning the attack. The UN General Assembly then voted 127 to 2 (Israel and the United States opposed) to demand Israeli withdrawal and urged the imposition of sanctions on Israel. Leaders of the European Union "vigorously condemned" the Israeli invasion. In Israel itself, more than fifty thousand Israelis marched in protest against their government's action.

The siege of Beirut was bitter. The Palestinians held out there for more than two months while the Israeli army and air force blasted the city with artillery and aerial bombardment and cut off water and electricity. Some Palestinians and other observers compared the battle to the siege of the Warsaw ghetto. Tens of thousands of people were made homeless, wounded, or killed. Worse would follow.

Before the worst happened, the PLO withdrew. It received a guarantee from the US government for the safety of its fighters and the safety of the inhabitants of the refugee camps. As Sharon had planned, the guerrillas took ship for a new exile in faraway Tunis. But the resident Palestinian refugees remained in the camps. Two weeks later a Lebanese Christian militia, the Phalange, with tactical support from the Israeli army and air force, invaded the enormous Sabra and Shatila refugee camps outside Beirut and massacred thousands of Palestinian men, women, and children.[33]

One last note needs to be recorded: Sharon's target was not just the soldiers but also what amounted to the national archives, the "memory bank" of the Palestinians. As the noted American journalist Thomas Friedman wrote,

> Ignoring an oral promise to the United States not to enter West Beirut after the PLO evacuated, Israeli troops fanned out across the western half of the capital in the early hours of September 15. Two targets in particular seemed to interest Sharon's army. One was the PLO Research Center, no ammunition, and no fighters. But there was evidently something more dangerous—books about Palestine, old records and land deeds belonging to Palestinian families, photographs about Arab life in Palestine, historical archives about the Arab community in Palestine, and, most important, maps—maps of pre-1948 Palestine with every Arab village on it before the state of Israel came into being and erased many of them. The Research Center was like an ark containing the Palestinians' heritage—some of their credentials as a nation. In a certain sense, that is what Sharon most wanted to take home from Beirut.[34]

The real aim of the invasion, then, was the destruction of Palestine as a nation. As the soldiers left for Tunis, the archives were shipped off to Israel. The story of the Palestinian nation was to be forgotten.[35] But rarely in human affairs can a whole people be forgotten. As we have seen, issues and events return to haunt those who thought they had "won."

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, like the American invasion of Iraq twenty years later, shattered the fragile cohesion of the country and let loose forces of chaos. A later Israeli prime minister, General Yitzhak Rabin, commented that the Palestine uprising (*intifada*) was part of the process Israel had provoked by its invasion. And in the invasion, Israel acquired a new enemy, the Shiah community of Lebanon under the leadership of Hizbullah, the Party of God. To them I now turn.

CHAPTER 35

Hizbullah, Stateless Nation

The mountains and foothills along the Levantine coast have sheltered refugees from the earliest times. Among those who survived to become permanent residents are a dozen sects of Christians, Jews, Druzes, Alawis, Ismailis, and "Twelver" Shiis.[1] They are descendants of peoples who lived there long before the coming of Islam, or products of the union of those peoples with newer arrivals. Even today their languages or dialects preserve words that are alien to the common language, Arabic. Of them, the Twelver Shiis (those who revere all twelve of the allegedly divinely designated imams of the Prophet Muhammad) are today the most numerous. About two in five Lebanese think of themselves as Shiis of the Twelver rite.

Throughout their history, Lebanese and Syrian Shiis have often felt endangered. Under the Ottoman Empire and during the periods of French rule and independence up to about 1960, they reacted with the traditional Shiah method of self-defense. They kept mainly to themselves, and when they ventured among the Sunnis, they often practiced dissimulation (*taqiya*) and pretended to be Sunnis. This pretense was not difficult because in most of their customs, their dress, and their manner of earning a living, Sunni and Shii villagers appeared similar. Similar, that is, except for the Shiis' participation in the passion play (Taaziye) that lay at the heart of their religious belief. This belief tied them tightly together and, at least in sentiment, tied them to the Shiis of Iraq and Iran.

The Shiis are the largest of the several "nations" (*millets*) that compose Lebanon. Their political organization is Hizbullah (the Party of God), and they are congregated mainly in the far south of Lebanon and in the northeast.

I had read about the Shiis earlier, but I got to know them personally in the 1950s when I used to visit two Oxford colleagues, the Welsh social anthropologists Emrys and Stella Peters, who were conducting a study of a Shiah village in South Lebanon.[2] At the time I was beginning a study of a Druze village farther north. The Druze are usually considered to be an offshoot of Shiism, and I profited from the Peters' remarkably detailed study. There was much to compare, but one aspect of religious belief and practice was particularly notable. Both the Druze and Shiah religions were closed to outsiders, but they

were closed in different ways. The Druze believe in the transmigration of souls. Theoretically at least, the society was genetically closed. One had to be born into their society, taking up the soul of a departed member of the community. While Twelver Shiis do not believe in transmigration, they created socially what the Druze created genetically, a barrier to outside intrusion. They did not welcome visitors and themselves seldom went abroad.

Their closure to outsiders was not the only basis on which to compare the two societies, of course, but it profoundly affected their attitudes and actions. Politically, it did this in two opposing ways. Put simply, I found that the Druze felt secure enough in their separate suprahuman unity that they could venture out into the world unafraid —they did not practice taqiya—whereas the Shiis, feeling threatened and insecure, withdrew and camouflaged themselves.

The contrast I observed half a century ago would be reversed in the latter years of the twentieth century, and one of the signs of this reversal was the formidable Shiah political movement known as Hizbullah, "the Party of God."[3] To understand how this change came about and what resulted from it, we must delve into attitudes and actions among the Lebanese Shiis. The transformation of the Shiah community emerged from the coincidence of several streams of events.

The first stream of events occurred in Iran. Twice in the twentieth century, the Iranian Shiah establishment took part in revolutionary activities. The first revolution, in 1905, resulted in a compromise in which the old regime was reasserted under new leadership. Reza Shah managed to force the religious leaders back into their sanctuaries or into exile, but he could not sever their connection with the mass of the Iranian people. Reza's son, Muhammad Reza Shah, also tried to weaken the clerics' influence and power. He excluded them from all activities of his regime and publicly vented his contempt for them. He completely misjudged popular attitudes toward Shiism—and toward his regime. The second upheaval, which erupted in 1979 but was years in formation, was a true revolution. It not only overthrew the government but also transformed Iranian society and the role of the religious establishment within it. Iran became a Shiah theocracy.

The Shiis of Lebanon watched Iran through the years before the 1979 revolution sadly but quietly. They saw how the Iranian clerics were brushed aside, imprisoned, or driven into exile. They saw how Muhammad Reza Shah, the darling of the North, proclaimed his regime to be virtually a part of the North, indeed an imperial power of which he was the emperor. They saw in the flow of propaganda and news reports that secular Iran had become enormously rich and powerful. As they interpreted contemporary events in the light of their

passion play, they came to see Iran as a modern version of the tyranny of the Umayyads and the killing of the grandsons of the Prophet Muhammad. They saw the passion play as a manifestation of their contemporary condition.

In Shiah terms, the leaders of the religious establishment, the mujtahids, are the closest that modern Muslims can come to God-designated imams. They regard the most senior and most venerated of the mujtahids, the ayatollahs, as the custodians of virtue as humans await the Final Day, when the "real" imam will "return." The ayatollah, in this theology, is as close as a mortal can be to God's representative on Earth. In the passion play, the "righteous man," Imam Husain, is the center of the tragedy. He and his family were slaughtered.

But in today's world, the representative of the righteous man was not defeated. Although, like Muhammad's grandson Imam Husain, he was without an army, a government, or vast riches, Ayatollah Khomeini deposed the shah. He could do so, he proclaimed, because he was "ordained by God" to exercise the "rule of the religious jurist." His overthrow of the shah was stunning precisely because it appeared miraculous. It was taken as the "proof" or "sign" of God—the meaning of the word *ayatollah*. Shiis believe they have God on their side. Against His will, money, weapons, armies, and policies are helpless. So was the support of the great powers. As I was often told, America gave the shah's regime money and weapons, trained his officials, and even overthrew his enemies. But when his time came, it was all for naught. There is no doubt, the believers say, that God will prevail, and the Shiis, they assert, are the true Party of God, whose success is assured. As the Quran 5/56 affirms, "The Party of God [Hizbullah] are victorious."

Lebanese Shiis could hardly fail to be moved by the Iranians toward fulfillment of God's prophecy, but they needed guides to find the way. The Iranian influence on the Shiis in Lebanon can be traced initially to two men.

The first of these was Muhsin al-Hakim, a leading member of a family that had played a significant role in the 1905 Iranian revolution. Claiming descent from the Prophet and renowned for their theological scholarship, this family was revered among Shiis in Iraq and Iran. Their base was what might be termed a postgraduate divinity school in the Iraqi city of Najaf that dated back to the eleventh century and was regarded as a fount of Islamic law. Al-Hakim was elected to the small company of ayatollahs long before the 1979 revolution.[4] Struggling against the trend among Iraq's deprived Shiah community to hide from politics and probably also pushed by his younger and more active colleagues, he issued legal opinions

criticizing the governments of both Iraq and Iran. For him and most of the religious establishment, they were secular tyrannies. He differed from many of his colleagues in proclaiming his judgment publicly and also in reaching beyond his "neighborhood," Iran and the Shiah enclave in Iraq. In 1959, he reached out to the leaderless and more or less isolated Lebanese Shiah community. As his agent or missionary, he selected a trusted, well-trained, and vigorous young religious scholar, his cousin Musa al-Sadr.

Al-Sadr was born in the Shiah holy city of Qom in Iran and studied Islamic jurisprudence at the University of Tehran and at the divinity school in Qom. He then went to Najaf, where he became a follower of Ayatollah al-Hakim. On orders from the ayatollah, he established himself in the Lebanese city of Tyre.

There he had to tread a very difficult path. His Shiah congregation was caught in the rough politics of Lebanon; they had the highest rate of poverty in the country and had little access to social services or education. Al-Sadr set about trying to better their living conditions as a prelude to giving them a political voice. He began a complex series of negotiations with various Lebanese political factions and with the PLO that produced little of substance. Making little progress, he decided in 1974 that he must create an organization if he hoped to have much impact. This organization, known as the Movement of the Deprived, focused on educational and public health programs but also, in the Lebanese style, created an armed, militant branch known as Amal.[5] Always seeking means to accommodate rivals and lay the basis for unity, al-Sadr made what in theological and political terms was a significant revolution by, at least symbolically, proclaiming that the dissident Alawis were also a part of the Shiah fold.[6] He also elicited much comment by giving a sermon in a Christian church on the evils of sectarianism.[7]

More immediately, al-Sadr followed Ayatollah al-Hakim's order to support the Palestinian resistance.[8] This move focused the attention of the Lebanese Shiis on the entry of the Palestinians into Lebanese affairs and the Israeli invasion of the Shiah area of South Lebanon.

I will now consider these events again, this time from the Shiah perspective.

Following their expulsion from Jordan, the PLO and other Palestinian resistance movements deployed combatants along the Lebanese frontier and began guerrilla incursions into Israel. There is no evidence that they were aided militarily by the Shiah villagers, and there is some anecdotal evidence that the Shiis were opposed to their presence.[9] The Palestinians were either Christians or Sunni Muslims and so were, in religious terms, foreigners. They also requisitioned village property to create their bases. The Shiis just wanted to be left

alone. As one told an American reporter, “Let them fight elsewhere.”[10]

Far worse was that the Israeli military began to carry out retaliatory raids against the Palestinians and in the process hurt many Shiis and damaged their villages. These raids culminated in the March 1978 invasion, when over twenty-five thousand troops stormed into the Lebanese south. At one point in the operation, the Israeli army occupied a score of villages, something that had not happened to the Shiis in living memory.

Ironically, it was at this time that the Shiah imam al-Sadr disappeared, or, in the modern phrase, “was disappeared,” while on a visit to Muammar al-Qaddafi in Libya. Allegedly Qaddafi was outraged by statements al-Sadr had made that set forth the Shiah view of Islam, but there is no firm evidence of what happened. He never reappeared, but what is crucial in the events that followed is that the organization he founded survived.

Although most of the Palestinians managed to evade and retreat to fight another day, the Shiis, who were mainly farmers, were less mobile. During the operations, as they were hit with US-supplied cluster bombs or blasted with artillery, thousands of Shiis were killed and perhaps as many as a quarter million were forced to flee their homes. The damage to their property was immense.

The UN Security Council demanded an immediate Israeli withdrawal and created another ad hoc supervisory force, known as the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, to guard the combat zone, that is, the Shiah south. But the UN force was rendered ineffective by the Israeli creation of a renegade Lebanese fiefdom, the so-called South Lebanon Army, which Israel supplied, armed, and subsidized, and to which it turned over the territory it had conquered. This group immediately attacked the UN peacekeeping force; thus, despite the ceasefire agreed to by both Israel and the PLO, the fight raged on. It would continue for the next twenty-one years.[11]

The activities of the PLO and the Israeli invasion, as one violent engagement followed another, showed conclusively that the traditional Shiah defenses—withdrawal and taqiya—were ineffective. And, reacting to their failure, the Shiis underwent a tidal transformation. They became one of the most powerful and dedicated of the resistance movements, wrapping themselves in the theological gown of the Party of God, Hizbullah.

Hizbullah was an outgrowth, or more exactly a splinter of a splinter, of the Movement of the Deprived founded by al-Sadr in 1975. When the first subsidiary organization, Amal, did not encourage resistance to Israel, those who believed in resistance broke off and formed a new organization that called itself Islamic Amal. This small group joined with other resistance-minded Shiis to form what is today

Hizbullah.

The Hizbullah ruling committee set out its program and philosophy in a 1985 manifesto. According to a US Congressional Research Service summary,

> Hezbollah's 1985 manifesto continues to guide the organization, although its leaders have updated their positions to reflect changes in domestic and international politics. Drawing on Shiite religious and cultural traditions and building on the ideology of Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini and other Shiite Islamist clerics, Hezbollah portrays itself as a defender of the oppressed and the weak against what it regards as the injustice of the strong. Specifically, Hezbollah defines itself in direct opposition to what it views as a basic imbalance in global and regional power in favor of the United States and Israel. Hezbollah leaders consider recent U.S. foreign policy as driven by an urge to consolidate U.S. economic and political hegemony under the guise of combating terrorism. Historically, Hezbollah has sought to justify its actions as legitimate resistance to the occupation of Lebanese territory by Israel and as opposition to U.S. intervention in Lebanese and regional affairs.[12]

Following the Israeli killing of Hizbullah's cofounder Abbas al-Musawi in 1992, Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah was elected general secretary. One of the most able men ever to come to the fore in Middle Eastern politics, he continues to lead Hizbullah to the present day.

Unlike al-Sadr, Nasrallah was born in Lebanon. Coming from what we would call a lower-middle-class family, he was a generation younger—born in 1960—than the other leaders, and, like the bulk of the Shiah community, he grew up a villager, never far from the flash of gunfire or the explosion of bombs. He joined Amal while still in his teens and came under the influence of the Iraqi Shiah movement al-Dawah, which was struggling against the tyranny of Saddam Husain. Then, after the Israeli invasion of 1982, Nasrallah joined Hizbullah and followed the trail of other clerics back to Iran to study theology in Qom. His path was already marked out for him. Returning to Lebanon and finding the organization already engaged in intermittent hostilities with Israel, he quickly committed himself to building its military capability with help from Iran and Iraq.

To carry out Hizbullah's program, Nasrallah implemented four basic policies. First, he continued al-Sadr's efforts to build a constituency. Under his administration Hizbullah has undertaken a remarkable social services program. It now operates what the Congressional Research Service described as "a vast network of schools, clinics, youth programs, private business, and local security—which many Lebanese refer to as 'a state within the state.' "[13] These activities affect the lives of hundreds of thousands of mostly Shiah Lebanese but also increasing numbers of Lebanese Christians.

Second, Nasrallah has built Hizbullah's military capacity. In 1982 it

lacked the resources and the space to build a standing army, and its leaders recognized that none of the Arab states could match Israeli technology, organization, or equipment—especially when these were supplied or augmented by the United States. Hizbullah has therefore adopted guerrilla warfare but adapted it to the particular circumstances of its conflict with Israel. Repeated battles have shown it to be far more successful than any previous Arab state or organization. In 2000 it inflicted what outside observers consider the first defeat of the Israeli army and forced the Israelis to withdraw from its territory; more recently, several thousand Hizbullah combatants have become the most successful forces supporting the Bashar al-Assad government in the Syrian civil war.

Because so many of its members have been assassinated or have died in combat, the organization has compensated by developing impressive intelligence and counterespionage skills, helped by the Shiah community's remarkable internal cohesion. Foreign intelligence agencies have had virtually no success in penetrating Shiah organizations. To a surprising degree, Hizbullah has also mastered what is known as communications intelligence and used it with considerable success against the very sophisticated Israelis.

Third, Hizbullah has developed powerful capabilities for covert or terrorist actions. Its truck-bomb attack on a contingent of French and American forces in Beirut in 1983 caused President Ronald Reagan to withdraw the survivors. The American government and the media were astonished by this attack, which certainly was vicious and deserved condemnation. But it would be naive to think that any side or faction has a monopoly on atrocity. Everyone—Hizbullah, Iran, Israel, the PLO, the Russians, the British, the Americans—has dirty hands. The record is full of terrorism, forced evacuations, bombings, and murder, and, rightly or wrongly, the morality of these actions is often in the eye of the beholder.[14] It is notable that Nasrallah denounced al-Qaida for the World Trade Center bombing on September 11, 2001, drawing a distinction between killing civilians, as al-Qaida did, and killing armed soldiers, as Hizbullah did in its attack of October 1983.

The fourth program Hizbullah has undertaken is to participate in Lebanese electoral politics. This venture has surprised many observers and dismayed some Shiis. In his 2009 policy statement, Nasrallah argued for participation in "consensual democracy." In Lebanon, unlike most Middle Eastern states, such participation is feasible. By agreement, the Speaker of the Lebanese Parliament is always a Shii, and of the 129 members, 35 are today Shiis. Eleven of these are members or allies of Hizbullah. Since the Shiah community is now almost twice the size of the other major ethnic and religious groups,

the Maronites and the Sunnis, the Shiis are pressing for a reallocation of parliamentary seats.[15] How they will be treated by the incoming Lebanese president, General Michel Aoun, remains to be seen, but he is believed to regard them as an important ally.

What is the aim of Hizbullah? I do not believe this question has a fixed answer. The goal is not, I think, national. Nasrallah has proved himself too sensible to believe that Hizbullah can turn Lebanon into a Shiah state. What seems to be evolving is a multinational federation in which Lebanese Shiis participate alongside Iraqi and Iranian Shiis and cooperate with the quasi-Shiah Alawis of Syria. Each has its base of authority and power, and each concerns itself with distinct local issues.

The challenge that unites them is the perceived threat from the North, which they see as the American-Israeli alliance. Hizbullah remains deeply opposed to the continued existence of Israel as a Jewish state and is also opposed to imperialism, which it sees as being represented by both Russia and the United States. But it is pragmatically prepared to work with all three nations when this enhances its well-being or diminishes threats.

Hizbullah may be seen as a new form of political identity, a nonstate nation formed on a religious base. I believe such organizations will grow far more common in the coming years. Another such nation exists in Gaza, to which I now turn.

CHAPTER 36

Gaza and Hamas

Though inspired by the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood and existing in association with Palestinians living elsewhere, Hamas is a Gaza organization.[1] In order to understand it, one must begin with a look at Gaza and its history. Events and ecology have shaped the Gazans as much as religion and ideology.

Not all of the Palestinians were driven out or escaped to other Arab areas in the late 1940s. Some stayed in what became Israel; most moved to the West Bank, then under Jordanian control, or to Lebanon. Roughly one in four, about 250,000, crammed themselves into the 360 square kilometers of the Gaza Strip, an area about a quarter the size of New York or London. By 1980, the population numbered half a million, and it has reached some two million today, making Gaza one of the most densely populated areas on Earth.

Like most of the Middle East, much of Gaza is desert. Only a quarter, 104.4 square kilometers, is suitable for farming. Since 2000, a quarter to a third of this area has been lost to agriculture because Israel has created a buffer zone along its frontier from which all Gaza residents are excluded. If they approach, they are in danger of being shot. Effectively, Gaza is even smaller than the statistics suggest.

In July 2014, Israel pushed deeper into Gaza. As an English journalist who was an eyewitness reported, “A mile from Gaza’s eastern border with Israel once teeming streets lie silent and deserted. Every shop is closed and shuttered, no traffic dares to move and flat-roofed houses stand empty. . . . Israel has herded tens of thousands of Palestinians out of their homes and away from the border.”[2]

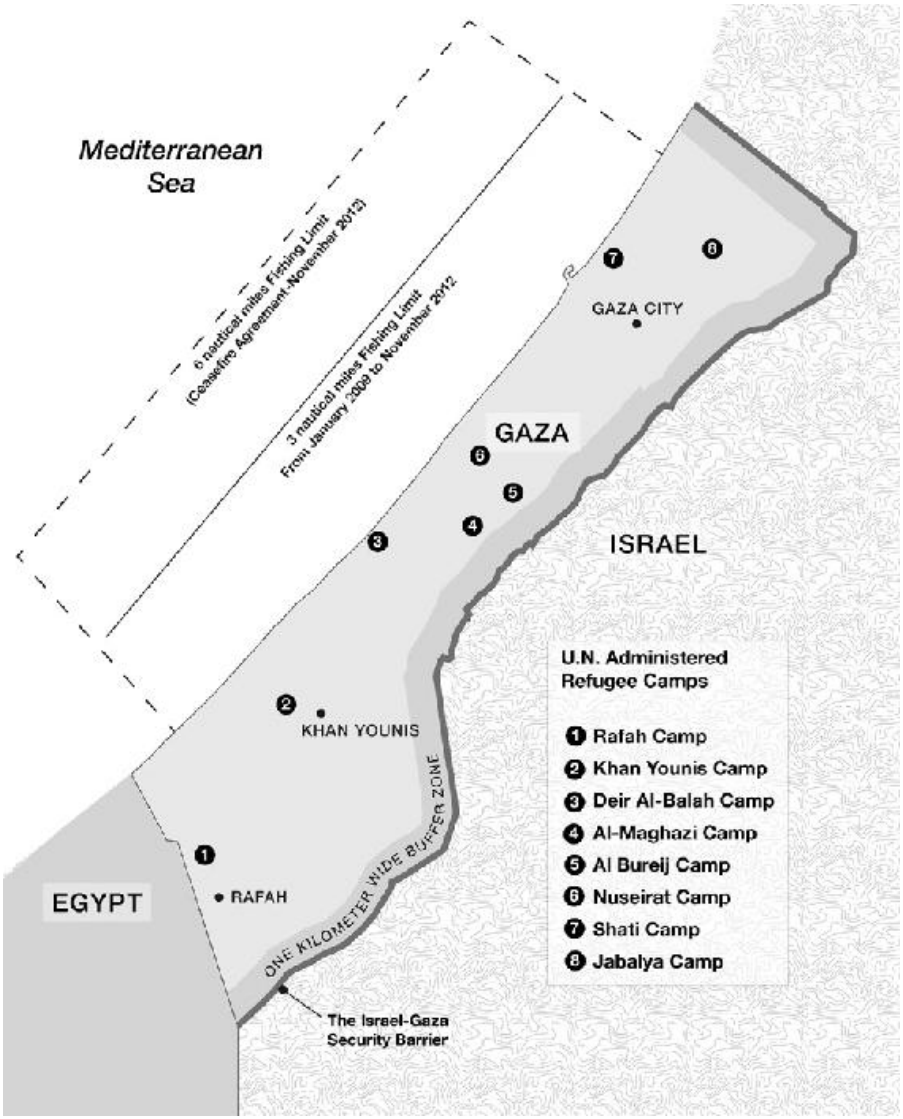
To the west of Gaza is the Mediterranean, which traditionally has been an integral part of the region’s life. Gaza fishers supplied a large part of the protein consumed by the population. Before 1999 they caught nearly four thousand tons of fish yearly, and the industry gave employment, directly or indirectly, to about forty-five thousand people. In recent years these figures have fallen to half or less.

According to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Food and Agricultural Organization, productive fishing shoals are about fifteen nautical miles offshore; until 2001 Israel allowed fishermen to reach them, but after 2002 Israeli authorities restricted them first to twelve miles and then to three miles. As a correspondent for the *Christian Science Monitor* reported, "Those fishermen who go further out risk being arrested, shot, and killed, or having their boats destroyed or confiscated. However, human rights organizations have reported that fishermen have been attacked even within the 3-NM zone."[3]

Kept away from the fish, fishermen earn little. The International Committee of the Red Cross in 2010 classified 90 percent of Gaza's four thousand fishermen as either "poor" or "very poor" and reported that the Gaza population was suffering from a lack of protein.[4] As Violeta Santos-Moura reported in *Foreign Affairs,* fishermen were able to meet only about 20 percent of the population's needs.[5]

In the Palestinian election of January 2006, Hamas defeated the PLO and gained the majority of seats in Parliament. At that point, the so-called Quartet (the European Union, the UN, the United States, and the Russian Federation) threatened to cut off all aid to the Palestinians if the Palestinian Parliament did not recognize Israel and give up its aim of liberating Palestine. When Hamas rejected this demand, the Quartet cut off aid. Israel followed by imposing sanctions.

The following March, the representatives in Parliament voted, with a unity that is rare in Palestinian affairs, to form a coalition government with Ismail Haniyah of Hamas as prime minister. The national unity government proclaimed a Palestinian sovereign state within the frontiers that had existed before the 1967 war and affirmed the right of return of the refugees in the Palestinian diaspora.



Gaza is a small strip of mainly desert alongside the Mediterranean. Lacking much agricultural land, it is heavily dependent on the sea for its food. Its government, the result of an election, is the political organization Hamas, and conflict with Israel has become perpetual. Israel placed it under an economic and military stranglehold. In turn, the Gazans have adopted a program of resistance that relies heavily on attack by homemade rockets. Warfare has been unending and, for the Gazans, disastrous.

Israel, which then held one-third of the members of Parliament in prison, refused to deal with this government. It stated that regardless of what Parliament decided, it would deal only with the nonexecutive president, Mahmoud Abbas.

Deprived of aid, and with its tax receipts and other revenues withheld by Israel, the parliamentary government was unable to pay

its employees' salaries. In the midst of the crisis, Abbas, who was legally only a ceremonial president, embarked on a police and military buildup, took control of the civil administration, and dissolved Parliament.

Generally unknown at the time was that Abbas had been holding meetings with Israeli prime minister Ehud Olmert to work out an agreement for division of the West Bank and to effect Palestinian recognition of Israel. These meetings were to culminate in a conference called by the US government in Annapolis, Maryland, the last week of November 2007. The conference foundered because neither Abbas nor Olmert could mobilize support for the compromise they had worked out, the so-called two-state solution.[6]

Yet, while it was questionable that either man could speak for his people, they agreed to negotiate and the major powers affirmed their authority. As the leader of the PLO, Abbas began a series of secret discussions with Israeli officials (Hamas was excluded from these talks) in which he offered to give up what most Palestinians thought were nonnegotiable national and religious objectives. The move became known when the Franco-Palestinian lawyer Ziyad Clot, who was legal adviser to the Palestinian negotiating team, leaked the documents.[7] He later wrote on the meetings in a book whose title tells it all: *There Will Be No Palestinian State.*[8] The effect of the revelations was to harden still further Hamas's position and to reemphasize Palestinian disillusionment with the PLO.

During these years of competition for power within the Palestinian community and discussions on the shape of a possible peace, the dreary conflict continued. Hatred of Israel was a given. Even in periods of relative calm, the Gazans continued to attack Israel, using increasingly sophisticated means to reach beyond the barrier the Israelis had constructed around the zone, digging tunnels under it and firing rockets over it.[9] Israel answered these attacks with aerial and artillery bombardments and ground attacks, and by tightening boycott and sanction restrictions on the people of Gaza, in the hope of forcing them to stop their support of Hamas.

In their attack on January 15, 2009, the UN reported that the Israeli army used white phosphorus shells against a UN compound where hundreds of people had taken refuge.[10] A Norwegian doctor also reported Israeli use of "nail shrapnel" and DIME (dense inert metal explosives).[11] Bodies hit by DIME "are pretty much destroyed by the enormous energy released by the explosives that are shot near them or at them." As it had done in Lebanon—and American troops did in Vietnam—the Israeli army also used flechette bombs and shells.[12] In the attack, 1,400 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were killed.[13]

Following the January 2009 attack, a prominent group of legal

experts and concerned citizens of a number of countries sent an open letter to the UN secretary general and ambassadors accredited to the UN, pointing out that "allegations of serious violations of the laws of war have emerged through the latest Gaza conflict—relating to the conduct and actions both by the Israeli military and by the Palestinian armed groups" and urging that a "prompt, independent and impartial investigation" be made. Among the signers of the letter were Archbishop Desmond Tutu, former president of Ireland Mary Robinson, and Justice Richard J. Goldstone, a former judge on the International Criminal Court. The group commented that "the events in Gaza have shocked us to the core. Relief and reconstruction are desperately needed but, for the real wounds to heal, we must also establish the truth about crimes perpetrated against civilians on both sides."[14] The UN Human Rights Council sent to Gaza a fact-finding mission consisting of three independent observers headed by Justice Goldstone.

Israel refused entry to the commission, but the members were able to enter Gaza through Egypt. It made its investigation and issued a 574-page detailed report on September 15. It announced two particularly controversial findings. The first was that "the conditions of life in Gaza, resulting from deliberate actions of the Israeli armed forces and the declared policies of the Government of Israel—as they were presented by its authorized and legitimate representatives—with regard to the Gaza Strip before, during and after the military operation, cumulatively indicate the intention to inflict collective punishment on the people of the Gaza Strip in violation of international humanitarian law." Second, "the Mission considered whether the series of acts that deprive Palestinians in the Gaza Strip of their means of sustenance, employment, housing and water, that deny their freedom of movement and their right to leave and enter their own country, that limit their access to courts of law and effective remedies could amount to persecution, a crime against humanity. From the facts available to it, the Mission is of the view that some of the actions of the Government of Israel might justify a competent court finding that crimes against humanity have been committed."[15]

The report came under severe attack. Under heavy pressure from the Jewish community (of which he was a prominent member), Goldstone repudiated his own findings and went to Israel to apologize for them; in the United States, the House of Representatives passed a resolution advising executive branch officials not to consider the report. But its findings were firmly upheld by Bishop Tutu and the other commission members.[16]

Whatever the attitude toward the report, it was uncontroversial that, under blockade, Gaza was "becoming uninhabitable."[17]

Following the bombing of the only power plant in July 2014, "which made pump stations inoperative . . . raw sewage has flooded streets in some areas of Gaza City . . . and hospitals are running on emergency reserves. . . . More than 80% of Gaza's 1.7 million inhabitants are in need of humanitarian aid and 65% of families are expected to be food insecure by the end of the year."[18] The situation then got worse. The World Bank found in 2015 that 43 percent of inhabitants were out of work, the poverty rate was 39 percent, and the "human costs of Gaza's economic malaise are enormous. If it were compared to that of other economies, unemployment in Gaza would be the highest in the world. . . . These numbers, however, fail to portray the degree of suffering of Gaza's citizens due to poor electricity and water/sewage availability, war-related psychological trauma, limited movement, and other adverse effects of wars and the blockade."[19]

Presumably some Gazans wanted to leave, but Israel restricted movement even to the occupied West Bank. Travel required official permission, and this was difficult to get. Fewer than two hundred people each day were allowed out of Gaza in the first half of 2013. As the American Friends Service Committee reported,

> The movement of both goods and people into and out of Gaza was strictly limited in 2005 when Israel unilaterally withdrew its settlers and redeployed its troops from Gaza. In that year Israel severely cut back the number of exit permits that it gave to Palestinians wishing to leave Gaza. These restrictions were strengthened in 2006 after HAMAS' victory in that year's parliamentary elections.[20]

The same report gives this summary of the blockade's effects:

- Less than one truckload of goods per day were allowed out of Gaza during the first half of 2013.
- 57 percent of Gaza households are food insecure, and approximately 80 percent receive some form of food assistance.
- 35.5 percent of those able and willing to work are unemployed—one of the highest unemployment rates in the world.
- Due to fuel shortages, there are power outages for up to 12 hours per day in most areas of Gaza.
- Only 25 percent of households in Gaza receive running water every day, and then only for a few hours.
- Over 90 percent of the water extracted from the Gaza aquifer is unsafe for human consumption, while needed filtration equipment cannot be imported to Gaza.
- Nearly 90 million liters of untreated or partially treated

sewage is dumped into the sea off of Gaza every day while equipment needed to build new or maintain existing treatment facilities are banned from entering Gaza.

The United Nations described the scale of human loss and destruction in the 2014 Israeli attack on Gaza as a catastrophe. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said that it had "shocked and shamed the world."[21] During the fifty days from July 8 until August 26, 2014, 2,251 Palestinians were killed, 1,462 of whom are believed to have been civilians, including 551 children and 299 women. Of the Israelis, 66 soldiers and 5 civilians, including 1 child, were also killed. Overall, 11,231 Palestinians were injured during the attack, including 3,540 women and 3,436 children. Roughly one-third of these children will have to live with permanent disabilities as a result of their injuries.

The Israeli air force and army also damaged 118 UN installations, including 83 schools and 10 health centers, and destroyed over 12,600 housing units. Almost 150,000 additional housing units sustained sufficient damage to be uninhabitable. The conflict led to a homelessness crisis in Gaza, with almost five hundred thousand persons displaced at its peak; thousands remain displaced today.

Israeli policy toward the European and American governments and peoples was described by General Sharon's principal adviser as "prevent[ing] a discussion on the refugees, the borders and Jerusalem." And, toward the people of Gaza, the policy was "to put the Palestinians on a diet, but not to make them die of hunger." Taking this policy literally, the Israeli defense ministry came up with the figure of 2,279 calories per person per day.[22]

Given the general condemnation of Israeli policies by the International Court of Justice, United Nations committees of inquiry, professional societies, and civil rights groups, one must ask why Israel has carried out this savage, at least partly illegal, unpopular, and unsuccessful policy. The Israeli motivations, in my view, are these. How each should be weighted is a matter of debate.

First, from the beginning of their movement, Zionists were determined to acquire all the "Land of Israel." That land has been defined in different ways, but it always included Gaza. The Israelis made an attempt to install Jewish settlers as they have done on the West Bank, but they have at least temporarily halted this move. Rightly or wrongly, Gazans believe Israel intends to drive them out and replace them with Jewish settlers.

Second, like the British before them in Palestine and like the Russians, Chinese, French, Dutch, Belgians, and Italians elsewhere, Israelis, with few notable exceptions, have regarded the Arabs as a "colonial" people, "natives," not part of the civilized world, indeed,

not really human. The killing of Palestinians was referred to by the Israeli military as "mowing the lawn."[23] Actions toward the Palestinians and other colonial peoples, the Israelis and the imperial powers proclaimed, should be judged by standards different from those applied to actions among peoples of the North. The British never figured out how to treat the Jewish settlers in the Palestine mandate. Although physically present in the Middle East, they were Europeans. Yet the British had no hesitation in dealing harshly with the Palestinians. The colonial practices the British applied to Africans and Asians were considered appropriate in dealing with them. When they achieved independence, the Israelis adopted the British approach, and even British laws, in dealing with the Palestinians. For the Israelis, this different approach is partly a matter of religious discrimination—Muslims do not fit in the Jewish state—but its application is also racial and historical. I have cast it as a contrast between the advanced, industrialized North, which includes America, Europe, Russia, Japan, China, and, by extension, Israel, on the one hand, and the weaker, less organized, poorer South, including the Muslim world, on the other hand.

Third, the Israelis believe, correctly, that the Arabs hope eventually to destroy the State of Israel. Virtually all people in the Muslim world think of Israel as the last of the European colonial powers. They see it as doing in Palestine what the French did in Algeria; the Dutch, in Indonesia; the Italians, in Libya; the Chinese, in Central Asia; and the Russians, in the Caucasus.

Being well aware of the Palestinians' attitude toward them, most Israelis (to judge by frequent public opinion polls) put their trust in their military power. They were justified in doing so. They won each encounter. Their conventional military force is far stronger than all their neighbors' combined. If that were not sufficient, they have large stockpiles of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. Finally, they are subsidized, armed, and supplied by the United States and have been helped with American procurement policies to develop an advanced arms industry. Arab states pose no military danger to Israel.

Nor do nonstate enemies, at least so far, pose an existential threat. With a superb intelligence organization (the Mossad), they have been able to penetrate, seduce, or destroy most such enemies. But domestically no Israeli government can afford to be considered soft on the danger of nonstate terrorism. Since this has also become the doctrine of the United States, Britain, France, and Russia, it has become de facto "legal." This new world order, Israelis believe, justifies preemptive attacks on their enemies. Their military doctrine stresses massive and proactive retaliation, extrajudicial violations of civil rights, and murder. Led by Zeev Jabotinsky, David Ben Gurion,

Avraham Stern, Menachem Begin, Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon, and others, they have long espoused "muscular Zionism."

Fourth, Israelis ground themselves on the traumatic experience of the European Holocaust. They replay this terrible memory in a sort of passion play to their children and grandchildren—and non-Jews—through films, books, museum exhibitions, and public ceremonies. They assert, and Europeans and Americans agree, that these tragedies set their state apart as a historical exception. That exceptionalism entitles their state to treatment different from what is common, or at least proclaimed, among nation-states. Israelis believe that extreme defensive measures are justified, and this allows many of them (not all) to look the other way when these measures cross over into atrocity.

Fifth, Zionists have grounded their claim to the Land of Israel on the Jewish religion. In his appearance before a largely secular audience at the Council on Foreign Relations in 1946, Israeli president Chaim Weizmann dismissed a question on the prospects for negotiation by saying, "We have a covenant with God." Many Zionists today consider Israel the essence of that covenant.

How do the people of Gaza, and particularly the members of Hamas, deal with these aspects of Israeli belief and practice?

The first thing to be said is that there are deep similarities between Islam and Judaism. Islam is not less assertive than Judaism in what it believes is its relationship with divinity. Shiah Muslims constantly replay memories of their own holocaust, and Sunni Muslims remind one another and everyone they meet of the tragedies they have suffered through European and Israeli actions. Increasingly, Muslims, not only the Palestinians but also Afghans, Iraqis, Syrians, Uyghurs, and others, have adopted a "muscular" strategy. They believe they must acquire an independent state to protect themselves, but that it is the determined policy of Israel and its supporters to prevent the formation of such a state. And, judging by the election of 2006, the majority of the people of Gaza hold the belief, forged rather than diminished by the war, that it must be an Islamic state. This was the message proclaimed by the founder of Hamas, Ahmad Yasin—whose influence is great enough to merit a brief digression.[24]

Yasin represented the generation that grew up in the Palestinian diaspora; he was twelve years old when his family reached a refugee camp in Gaza.[25] In a sporting accident, he was paralyzed and spent the rest of his life in a wheelchair. He wanted to attend the Islamic university, Azhar, in Cairo but could not afford to go; unemployed for years, he taught himself classical Arabic in order to read Islamic legal texts. Although lacking formal credentials, he became a schoolteacher and was allowed to give sermons at a local mosque. His growing

involvement in Islamic studies led him to join the Gaza branch of the Muslim Brotherhood in about 1980. He was first arrested by the Israeli police in 1984 for storing illegal arms but was released after a year. Around that time, Yasin hit on a plan to found a Gaza version of the Muslim Brotherhood. That was the origin, in 1987, of Hamas.

Israeli intelligence decided to help.[26] The Israelis thought the existence of a religion-based movement would divide Palestinians and weaken the secular PLO, which they then regarded as their principal opponent.

Whatever the Israelis hoped he would do, Yasin never wavered from his commitment to armed struggle to liberate Palestine and to the destruction of the State of Israel. He opposed any form of negotiated settlement, arguing that Palestinians must perform jihad successfully for liberation or die trying to achieve it.[27] To drive out the Israelis, violence was not only permissible but obligatory. Only by armed struggle could the Palestinians recover their land. No one, he argued, had the right to surrender Palestine, which is the patrimony of future generations. Recognizing Israel would thus be both a crime and a sacrilege. His continual broadcasting of this position brought him both widespread popularity among the Gazans and intense scrutiny by the Israelis. In 1989, after a number of increasingly violent clashes, the Israelis arrested and deported to Lebanon about four hundred Gazans they suspected of being Hamas activists or supporters. They also arrested Yasin on a charge of subversion and sentenced him to life imprisonment.

Let out of prison in 1997 in a bizarre prisoner exchange I will describe later, Yasin returned to urging attacks on Israelis. He was not put back in prison but was frequently placed under detention. When the PLO entered into a truce with Israel—the so-called Roadmap to Peace—in June 2003, his call for more intensive attacks resulted in the suicide bombing of an Israeli bus in Jerusalem in July. In retaliation, the Israeli Air Force bombed the building where he was living in Gaza; he was wounded but survived. Nine months later, in 2004, he, his entourage, and a group of bystanders were killed in a carefully orchestrated air strike as he emerged from praying in a mosque. He had achieved the ambition of *jihadis,* martyrdom.[28] About two hundred thousand people took part in his funeral.

As I have written, despite Yasin's absence, Hamas defeated the PLO in the Palestinian election of January 2006, but they were sidelined by the PLO leader Abbas in a virtual coup d'état. His move, which was sanctioned by the Quartet, convinced the Palestinians that representative institutions were ineffective. They had done what they had been told they must do to qualify as a democracy, voting in their choice of a government in a free election, but when outsiders did not

like their choice, they voided it. America in particular had spent hundreds of millions of dollars to encourage “democracy” and responsible government, but when it came to fundamental actions, even those enshrined in resolutions by the United Nations, the parliamentarians were sent away. In their disillusionment, many Palestinians concluded that there was no peaceful option. At that point, leadership passed to another angry young man, Khalid Mishal.

Mishal was not born in Gaza but on the West Bank, in 1960, more than a decade after the Palestinian exodus. Unlike Yasin, he was able to go abroad; his father moved to Kuwait to escape the 1967 war and took Mishal with him. As a teenager, he joined the local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, and later, while attending Kuwait University, he organized his Palestinian fellow students in a discussion club much like those that have long existed among Arabs, Turks, Crimeans, and Malays. In 1991 he moved from Kuwait to Jordan, where he went to work for Hamas. When Hamas was implicated in two suicide bombings in Jerusalem in 1997, Israeli intelligence singled him out for revenge.

He was caught in Amman on September 25, 1997, by a team of Mossad agents. Their plan of attack was both meticulous and bizarre. One of the Israeli team squirted in his ear a poison against which Jordan had no antidote. He was taken to a hospital, but the doctors could do nothing and gave him up for dead. Meanwhile, the members of the Israeli hit team were pursued by his bodyguards and captured by Jordanian security police. Mishal had been under the protection of King Husain’s government, and the king, furious, threatened to execute the Israeli agents if Mishal died. Caught red-handed, the Mossad provided the antidote for the poison and released several imprisoned Palestinians, including Shaikh Yasin, in exchange for their agents.[29] The attack was discussed in every coffee shop and bar in the Middle East, and Mishal emerged as a popular hero.

Mishal was elected Hamas leader in April 2014 when the previous leader was assassinated by the Israelis. As he began to take control of the organization, Mishal moved away from Yasin’s inflexible position toward a more nuanced strategy. He met with foreign officials, agreed to ceasefires, wrote for foreign newspapers, and joined such world political leaders as former American president Jimmy Carter and former Irish president Mary Robinson to call for an end to war.

Mishal was perhaps the first statesman to spend almost his entire career in exile: he ventured to Gaza for the first time only in 2012, to be greeted by tens of thousands of Gazans. The message he gave them was that their fight must continue, but in conjunction with attempts at diplomacy. Whatever the means, he said, the end result must be the liberation of Palestine. On this, he proclaimed, there could be no

weakening of resolve, and toward that objective all Palestinians must unite.[30] Three years later, Israeli deputy foreign minister Tzipi Hotovely would make almost an identical claim on behalf of Israel: “Palestine from the [Jordan] river to the [Mediterranean] sea, from the north to the south, is our land and we will never give up one inch.”[31] That is where the issue of Gaza rests today.

CHAPTER 37

The Uyghurs and Chinese Islam

The Uyghurs are Turkish-speaking farmers and merchants who traditionally lived in oases alongside the vast Taklamakan Desert, right in the center of Central Asia. Their cities and towns were once way stations on the desert trails known as the Silk Road that linked the Middle East to the Far East. To their north, beyond the Tienshan mountains, where the land turned from steppe to desert, nomadic societies of Mongols and Turks ranged from the Urals to the Pacific.

For thousands of years, since at least the third-century BCE Han dynasty, China was challenged by nomads. The second-century BCE *Discourse on Salt and Iron* contains cultivated Chinese thoughts on them. They "live in the desert and grow in the land which produces no food . . . abandoned by Heaven for being good-for-nothing. They have no houses to shelter themselves, and make no distinction between men and women. They take the entire wilderness as their villages and . . . tents their homes. They wear animal skins, eat meat raw and drink blood."[1]

What to do about them—or with them—was the Chinese perennial foreign affairs problem. They tried the whole range of policies. Most famously, they built the Great Wall to try to keep them away. They also tried pitting the tribes against one another, encouraging nomads to fight nomads (*i-i-fa-i*). They tried to make peace (*ho-ch'in*) even with their greatest threat, the tribesmen of the Xiongnu (also spelled Hsiung-nu) confederation (who are thought by some scholars to have been the Huns of European history).[2] Around 170 BCE, the Wen emperor lamented, "I have dispatched envoys in such profusion that their caps and cart covers are within sight of each other on the road, and their wheel tracks are joined in order to explain my intentions to the *Shanyu,* the ruler of the Xiongnu. . . . Together we cast aside our petty faults and together we will walk the higher road of virtue."[3] Implicit in his message, of course, was what would happen if the enemy ruler did not take the "higher road of virtue." When none of

these policies worked, the Chinese began perhaps the most complete version ever tried of regime change; they did not just attempt to overturn the ruling system but sought to totally reorder the way of life of the nomadic tribes. A policy planner by the name of Chia I in roughly 170 BCE devised a program known as the five baits (*ch'uan-hsing*) to corrupt their way of life: the Chinese would encourage the wild barbarians to put aside sheepskins and wear silk, dismount from the warhorse into a carriage, and move out of the yurt into a mansion. He hoped the barbarians would follow these steps with changes in all their customs. If they did, they soon would cease to be warriors and become docile dependents on Chinese largess. Even the Great Wall would be turned into a market to sell corrupting goods.

The program did not permanently change nomadic society, but it relieved the pressure on China. It would be a thousand years before a Chinese emperor had to face a serious challenge from Central Asian nomads. But what benefited China disrupted Europe; thwarted in China, wave after wave of Central Asian nomads hurled themselves against the Roman Empire. Even though the nomads were diverted, the Chinese found that they could not leave Central Asia alone. Among other things, the Central Asians had a powerful weapon of war that China could not produce for itself: the warhorse. Without the "heavenly horses" of the Fergana Valley, Chinese armies could not battle their nomadic enemies.[4] Paradoxically, the horse led them into Central Asia in the effort to keep the Central Asians at bay. Always, the nomads lurked just over the horizon.

Relations with the settled peoples to the south of the Tienshan were different. They posed no threat and in some ways were useful. As the Chinese began to explore Buddhism, their pilgrims and scholars moved through, were supplied by, and even settled for long periods in the cities on the way to and from India.[5] Without the oasis cities, they could not have survived the long trek through the deserts. Occasionally, especially during the sophisticated and rich ninth-century CE Tang dynasty, Chinese emperors and merchants developed a taste for Iranian and Arab goods, brought to China on the backs of camels plodding the Silk Road.[6] Still later, venturesome Italian merchants like Marco Polo's family and Muslim adventurers like the great traveler Ibn Battuta visited the city-states on the way to China.

The Central Asian peoples' usefulness did not cause the Chinese to regard them as civilized, but it did make them seem tolerable. Better to let them live their barbarian lives, most Chinese rulers thought, than spend the money and effort required to conquer and civilize them.

That hands-off attitude, which lasted for centuries, underwent a decisive change about the time of the American Revolution. Then the

vigorous Qing dynasty or Manchus, who were themselves a Mongol people, put aside diplomacy and turned to military power. The Qing Qinlong emperor went all the way: he opted for genocide. At his command, Chinese forces utterly destroyed the successors of the Xiongnu, the Zunghar nomads who lived in what is today Kazakhstan.

The settled people of the oases—the name Uyghur did not come into common use until after the Russian revolution—had even less of a relationship to the northern nomads than the Chinese did. Protected by the Tienshan mountain barrier, their city-states were anchored in agriculture and enriched by east–west rather than north–south trade. China was distant and, for centuries, almost out of touch. The societies of the "Seven Cities"—the *Yedişehir,* as they styled themselves in Turkish—were traditionally self-contained.[7] Like cities and towns all over Asia and much of Africa, each city formed an autonomous and autarkic center for adjoining agricultural areas, whose products they consumed, fashioned in their workshops, and traded in their markets. Little distinguished one city-state from another and from the still more distant city-states of Samarqand and Bukhara, even though they were separated by distances that were vast in relation to the available means of transport. As an observant Russian official later wrote, "Surrounded as they are by thousands of miles of Steppes so difficult to be traversed, [they] have accustomed themselves to a sense of perfect independence."[8]

That independence was largely a matter of water: where springs, melting mountain snow, or rivers could be tapped and conveyed by underground tunnels, people had gathered since prehistoric times and lived in harmony with what nature provided.[9] Many were ruled by tyrants, as was most of humanity throughout most of history. But the effective rule of their lives was custom. They did as their ancestors had done and rarely sought change. If challenged by invaders, they usually accommodated, since often the alternative was to be slaughtered. Over time, the survivors replaced themselves or were replaced by immigrants. As long as water was available, the cities survived.

It was from the "eternal" cities that individuals derived their sense of identity. I have pointed out that this was characteristic of cities and towns throughout Asia and Africa. When the Uyghurs came to probe what their sense of identity meant, they used the same Arabic word as earlier Egyptians, *watan.* The watan was the place where people got their sustenance and to which they owed their loyalty. The term initially referred to their village, town, or city and ultimately meant their "nation." A Central Asian's nation was his or her city.

Probably few people of the Seven Cities ever traveled far from the houses, gardens, or surrounding farms of their city. To the degree that

an inhabitant of Kashgar, Khotan, or Aksu looked outward, it was to the west, toward the similar oasis cities of Samarqand and Bukhara. It was the rare person who had knowledge of or even interest in the world beyond. This sense of isolation was replaced by the at least partial cultural unity that came with the arrival of the Islamic faith.

The coming of Islam is usually dated to the middle of the eighth century, when an army of the Abbasid caliphate defeated soldiers and officials of the Tang dynasty at the Battle of Talas. With this defeat, the Chinese were driven out of Central Asia and would not return for a thousand years. The year 751 is one of those deceptive dates in history that refers to a single event that stands in for a long-term process. While the battle was a major turning point, its full effects were not realized for generations. It would be about two centuries before Islam was blended with local practices to create the synthesis we can think of as a Muslim way of life in the Seven Cities.

One effect of Genghis Khan's terrible thirteenth-century rampage across Asia, in which his armies destroyed irrigation works, razed houses, slaughtered animal flocks, and massacred populations, was to divide Central Asian societies: he committed mass murder on the inhabitants of Bukhara and Samarqand but accepted the surrender of the cities on the southern flank of the Tienshan, putting their literate, educated merchants to work in the bureaucracy he had begun to create to manage his vast empire.[10] A second effect of the Mongol destruction was that it left the survivors desperate for solace. Little was offered by the Islam that had come to Central Asia in the camel bags of soldiers and in the scholastic texts of the jurists. The Sufis filled this need.

Itinerant Sufis, particularly of the vigorous Naqshbandiyah order, made Islam the popular religion of Asia. Far from cloistered monks, the Sufis frequently became warriors or, as they would have called themselves, jihadis. They formed the armies of Imam Shamil in the long guerrilla war against the Russian imperialists in the Caucasus. They led the resistance to the Dutch in Aceh and fought the Italians in Libya. In our times, Sufis galvanized the Taliban against the Russians and Americans in Afghanistan. Since most of the soldiers in the "armies" of Muslim resistance movements were just short-term volunteers, Sufis often made the difference between success and failure. Invigorated by belief and mobilized by tight organization, they performed as the warriors whom today's military tacticians think of as "stiffeners," forces that give coherence and élan to larger collections of would-be soldiers.

And they were everywhere. Just as the Sanusiyah built lodges (*zawiyahs*) throughout the deserts and steppe lands of North Africa, the Naqshbandiyah order operated from similar fortress-mosque-

school institutions they called *khanaqas* throughout the Central Asian city-states.[11]

Sufis also acted as spiritual guides to the public. Separate from the bureaucratized and often listless Muslim academics, they brought Islam to life in terms the public could relate to. There was an austerity to formal Islam that offered no solace in times of adversity or disaster. It portrayed God as a judge, stern and unyielding rather than loving and forgiving. Millions of Muslims sought a more personal relationship. Like Christians, they flocked to the graves of their "saints" to seek blessings or forgiveness. This was in violation of the teachings of formal Islam, but Sufis certified it as legitimate. Sufism became a mass movement. Its ceremonies were popular entertainment as well as religious gatherings, and its leaders became judges and even rulers. Guided by the Sufis, invigorated by the teachings of Arab and Iranian scholars, and enriched by trade over a much-expanded area, such city-states as Bukhara, Samarqand, Khoqand, Kashgar, and Aksu developed into vibrant Muslim societies.

In the centuries following the Mongol invasion, the peoples in the northern and western areas of what was beginning to be thought of as "Turkestan" participated in the creation of the Mughal Empire of India and in what became the Seljuq and Ottoman empires of the Middle East. But the city-states to the east, the Seven Cities, played little role in the great surge of Turko-Mongol conquests.

Then, in the eighteenth century, a more modern form of imperialism came to Central Asia. From the north, the Russian movement begun by Tsar Ivan the Terrible was resumed by Peter the Great, who sent armies into the area around the Caspian Sea and eastward into the great steppe lands of what is now Kazakhstan. At least in Central Asia, Russian imperialism got off to a shaky start. Peter's warriors died by the thousands for his ambition. The inhabitants of the city-state of Khiva mustered an army that slaughtered his soldiers in the south near the Caspian, while in the north the Zunghars, nomadic horsemen who were always ready for a fight, nearly wiped out the army he sent to loot their gold.

But Russia had huge reserves of manpower in its serf population and ambitious military leaders who sought promotions and decorations in battle. What Peter had started was continued by his successors. Catherine the Great moved into the lands of the Tatar Turkish peoples around the Black Sea and took over chunks of the Ottoman Empire. Alexander the Great and Nicholas later pushed into the Caucasus, finally defeated the Chechens, and overwhelmed the Kazakhs. Just like Southeast Asia under the Dutch, and South Asia under the English, Central Asia under the Russians came under the imperial rule of peoples from the global North.

China was intermittently a leader in this struggle for empire. While we do not think of it as part of the global North, China was always an imperial power. The earliest of its dynasties, the Shang, set the pattern of what might be called genetic imperialism: it conquered, exploited, and virtually consumed its neighbors.

The Chinese developed an elaborate world view of imperialism. At the center was the *t'ien-fu* or imperial domain, where the emperor ruled under the mandate of heaven (*t'in-ming*). This heartland was surrounded by quasi-autonomous states (*hou-fu*) controlled through subsidiary or puppet rulers by the empire, and just beyond this band of states was an alien area that was in the process of being converted to Chinese culture. Next came vassal states that were under "restraint" (*yao-fu*) and, finally, there was the barbarian world, the *huang-fu.* The Chinese view of the wild (*wai-i*) peoples was made clear by the use of such derogatory radicals as "dog" or "worm" next to their names. They were the Chinese version of *untermenschen.*[12]

In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Ming dynasty sent missions to distant cities in Central Asia and even to Isfahan, deep in Iran, but in general they prevented private commercial travelers from going into areas beyond the control of their government, and, fitting into their concept of the world order, they insisted that trade be considered a form of tribute (*kung*). As Joseph F. Fletcher has written, "Rulers of the petty oasis states on Ming China's Central Asian periphery gladly complied with the tributary formalities. Tribute missions were a lucrative business, and there was always the hope (usually unfounded) that Ming overlordship would carry with it some degree of protection as well. . . . The 'tribute system' left Central Asian trade in Central Asian hands but kept it under imperial control."[13]

In 1405, the Mongol conqueror Timur "the Lame" (Tamerlane) picked up where the Abbasid caliphate had left off after it had defeated the forces of the Tang empire at the Battle of the Talas River in 751 CE. The Ming dynasty was saved when Timur suddenly died. The Chinese emperor hurriedly sent a mission loaded with gifts and letters of condolence (interestingly, in three languages, Chinese, Iranian, and Uyghur), across Central Asia to Herat (in what is now Afghanistan) to Timur's successor Shahrukh Bahadur. This venture began a series of diplomatic and commercial exchanges in which the Uyghur people must have played a role and from which they benefited. But neither the Chinese emperor nor Shahrukh Bahadur was willing to play by Chinese rules. When the Yung-lo emperor interfered in Mongol politics, commended the Mongol ambassador for doing homage (*khidma*), and proclaimed himself as, by God's command, "lord of the realms of the face of the earth," the Mongol emperor responded in Arabic and Iranian by advising the Yung-lo emperor "to

put aside his infidel ways and adopt Islam . . . [but both rulers] moderated their imperious tone and continued to exchange embassies."[14]

Then, in 1644, the Manchus invaded China and overthrew the Ming dynasty. The new dynasty, known as the Qing, was much more bellicose. And, in 1646, the first of the Central Asian city-states, Turfan, accepted tributary status to the Qing.

The Qing resumed the Chinese march into Central Asia in the seventeenth century. Their name for Central Asia is the one we and their successors use today, Xinjiang. Their first objective was to overwhelm the Zunghar people.

The Zunghars were the most powerful and warlike people of Xinjiang. They were nomads who ranged the steppe lands north of the Tienshan. And as I mentioned, the Qianlong emperor exterminated them. The Chinese considered them wai-i or virtual animals. While the Chinese were determined to destroy them and all the nomads, they were ambivalent about the settled people along the Silk Road. They were useful to commerce and might even be helpful as "inner barbarians" against the outer barbarians, among whom the emperor classed the Russians. The peoples of the Seven Cities approved the destruction of the Zunghars, whom they also feared, but they misread Chinese inactivity for weakness. They refused to pay the taxes the Qing demanded, insulted Qing officials, and threatened Qing interests.

In a policy paper dating from the Ming dynasty, about 1592, the leading Chinese strategist Chang Chü-cheng had laid out the traditional policy to deal with vassal states that were or should have been "under restraint," which the inhabitants of the Seven Cities already were: "How can one hold responsible the arrogant, bellicose barbarians who have surrendered only recently? The important principle for the officials in charge is to deal with them in a flexible manner: Just like dogs, if they wag their tails, bones will be thrown to them; if they bark wildly, they will be beaten with sticks; after the beating, if they submit again, bones will be thrown to them again; after the bones, if they bark again, then more beating."[15]

Possibly with Chang's policy paper at hand, the Qing decided that they had to react to the (apparently rather mild) rebellion of the oasis cities. But, no doubt carrying over their draconian policy in Zungharia, they overreacted. They succeeded, but the campaign was costly in both money and lives. The cost, their concern about potential future problems, and, paradoxically, their success caused their strategists to debate their policy. The more cautious favored getting out of Central Asia altogether, arguing that the costs would be high and the rewards few. Their rivals, whom today we would call the hard-liners, favored keeping the city-states along the Silk Road in the

empire. According to the records, the decision was made not for geopolitical or economic reasons but on the basis of filial piety.

The imperial Chinese regime, the more aggressive advisers argued, had the obligation to protect what the emperor's ancestors had won.[16] In terms of Chinese culture, their argument was irrefutable. Cost and reward were irrelevant; it was "piety" that mattered. Translated into modern terms, "piety" equals "national pride," the "white man's burden," the "war on terror," and other justifications for action. Action is always easy to justify, even when costs are high and rewards few. Inaction, on the contrary, is often judged to be "impious," unpatriotic, or weak.

This was the Qing policy of colonialism in the last years of the eighteenth century and the early years of the nineteenth. First they took over large areas from the defeated rebels, and then they sought to divide them by banning Chinese colonialism along the Tarim Basin while encouraging it north of the Tienshan. When this failed to pacify settled people of the Seven Cities, they recommenced in the 1820s one of the oldest and most effective means of counterinsurgency: settling the conquered area with new people. Having killed off the Zunghars, the Qing moved non-Han minority groups that were Muslim (Huihui, Tungans, or Dungans) and non-Muslim Han Chinese into what had been Zungharistan.[17] Their aim was both to supply their troops with food the settlers could grow and to create a Chinese population from which they could recruit a militia. Apparently, they did not try to introduce these settlers into the existing cities, but they imposed on the city-states throughout the area the imperial bureaucracy that was always associated with Chinese rule. Most important, they decided to preserve the cities rather than destroy them.

After the Qianlong emperor died, his successors were increasingly distracted by problems in the Chinese heartland. Already weakened by financial shortfalls, the Qing were undermined by one disaster after another—the First Opium War of 1839–1842; the Taiping Rebellion of 1850, which lasted more than a decade; the Second Opium War, which overlapped with it; and revolts of ethnic Chinese Muslims. These terrible episodes caused the deaths of millions of people. Already after the First Opium War and later, weakened by decades of war, the Chinese pulled back from the aggressive policies of the Qianlong emperor and allowed at least the far western city-state of Khoqand, in the lush Fergana Valley, a degree of autonomy approaching nationhood.

The new policy was not a success. The Central Asians continued to raid Chinese-held cities and frontier posts. These raids apparently were opportunistic rather than political: they were conducted by bandits in search of booty. But under the pressure of events, they

began to assume a more serious character. The loosening of Chinese control encouraged religious militants to grow more aggressive. In the 1850s, spurred by militant Sufis, the raids turned into what amounted to a religious war. Qing rule in Central Asia virtually collapsed.

Into this void came an adventurer by the name of Yaqub Beg.[18] He made his debut as a military commander under the khan of the city-state of Kashgar. After achieving a reputation for success, and presumably having acquired loot with which to pay his followers, Yaqub catapulted himself into independent power. In rapid succession in the 1860s, he managed to conquer the Seven Cities one after another to create a sort of empire. In doing this, he intruded not only on Chinese interests but also on those of Russia and even British India. Although there is no indication that he thought in these terms, it was Yaqub who first posed the Central Asian version of the South rebelling against the North.

To cope with the problems and benefit from the opportunities Yaqub presented, the Russians were the first to try a new strategy. To block Yaqub's people from moving into the area they had staked out for their own settlers north of the Tienshan, they stationed troops in the area around Lake Balkhash and along the Ili River and, at the same time, they encouraged Yaqub to bar the advance of Chinese forces south of the Tienshan on the Silk Road.

Yaqub was caught in a vise. Already threatened by the Russians to the north and the Chinese at the center of his new state, he now feared encroachment from the British in the south. Like all contemporary Muslims, he must have been aware of the fate the Mughal Empire had suffered when English traders and soldiers moved from their beachhead in Bengal across India. Danger was everywhere, but the most immediate threat, he decided, was Russian.

Russian forces had occupied Tashkent in 1865 and in quick succession took Samarqand and other cities in western Turkestan. They humiliatingly defeated the ruler of the still great city of Bukhara. Yaqub mobilized his forces to resist, but he knew he did not have the necessary strength, so he and the Russians agreed on a compromise. The Russians would recognize him as the ruler of the Seven Cities and he would allow their merchants access into and through his territory to China. The terms were set out in a treaty in 1872.[19] Like many treaties between the North and the benighted rulers of the South, it was a step rather than a stop.

Meanwhile, in reaction to the Russians, the British got into the act. Since the time of Peter the Great, they had been fearful of Russian moves toward India. As they were well aware, it was possession of India that had made England into a world power. If their Indian empire were lost, England would shrink to a small and unimportant

power—at least that is what its government thought. As King George III had said, it was the empire that made England a great state. If the empire were lost, England would suffer "total ruin [since] a small State may certainly subsist, but a great one moldering cannot get into an inferior situation [and] must be annihilated."[20] To keep from moldering, the state must advance. Thus, from King George's time, when the East India Company took over Bengal, the state had marched across India and found no place to stop. "Forward" was the essence of its policy.

Britain also assigned itself a stake in Central Asia. Prominent Englishmen, the successors to the Nabobs who had led England into India, trumpeted the vast wealth of the Seven Cities and the advantages to be gained from opening a back door to China. Both claims were largely spurious, but they intoxicated the great men of the British Empire. Thus it was that Britain also negotiated an agreement with Yaqub in 1874.[21] For the Indian merchants, it was a trade agreement; for British strategists, it established an outpost; for Yaqub, it was a warning.

To try to secure his position, Yaqub reached far afield. He had already sent missions to the Ottoman Empire several times between 1872 and 1876. In his demarches, he is thought to have offered to become a sort of provincial governor like the semi-independent Ottoman pashas. For Yaqub, such an offer could be only symbolic, but he may have thought it could bring him some benefits. Perhaps the sultan was flattered, but he lacked the means to play in the Central Asian game. The Ottoman state, already the "sick man of Europe," had no surplus resources to expend in Central Asia. However, the sultan did send some military advisers, a few arms, and a new title. Yaqub could style himself "Commander of the Faithful."[22] All to no avail: titles were not soldiers, the Seven Cities were not a coherent nation-state, and Yaqub had not long to live. His death sometime in late May 1877, perhaps by poisoning, perhaps of a stroke, remains a mystery.

All these moves—Russian, British, and even Ottoman—alarmed the Chinese. When opportunity arose in the chaos following Yaqub's death, the Chinese decided to reverse their policy of caution or even withdrawal. The Qing emperor appointed a vigorous and brutal governor who was determined to suppress any sign of Muslim bids for independence. Regarding all Muslims as either rebels (if of Turkish origin) or traitors (if of Chinese origin), he massacred the ethnic Chinese Muslims, the Dungans, and was not much kinder to the Uyghurs and Kazakhs. After his successful campaigns, the Qing in 1884 drew on convicts and impoverished peasants to settle the steppe lands north of the Tienshan. Hoping that these people would turn the

steppe into farmlands to raise food for the Chinese garrisons, the Chinese catered to their sentiment by bestowing the name “Muslim Area” (*Hui jang*) on what had been known as Zungharia. In effect, they laid the basis for the would-be nation-state of the Uyghurs.

We do not know much about the attitudes of the people in Hui jang. Later generations saw or imagined nationalist sentiments or even a nation-state already in Yaqub’s Seven Cities. How real such notions were is questionable. There does not seem to have been an identifiable movement, only a few, very small political discussion groups, one of which was known as the Uyghur Club. The cities’ most active and strongest group of inhabitants were merchants, who accommodated to foreign powers so long as they were allowed to trade. That was already their policy even while Yaqub was alive. The Chinese encouraged their accommodation with land grants in the area taken from the Zunghars.[23] The evidence, I think, adds up to a reassertion of the time-honored habit of following a successful leader and dumping him when he seems about to fail.

There is no convincing sign of a sense of nationhood or of any significant nationalist sentiment until at least a generation after the collapse of Yaqub’s empire. As the well-informed Russian governor M. Romanovski remarked, unlike the vigorous patriots of the Caucasus, “the industrious and peaceful inhabitants of Central Asia cannot, in the course of a few years, be turned into independent and warlike Caucasian mountaineers, who by nature and history, for a long series of ages, have been a martial people.”[24]

Whether the people living in the Seven Cities were militants or just pawns, their area had become the cockpit of imperialism. The American historian Owen Lattimore would describe Sinkiang as the “pivot” around which Asian politics revolved.[25] Britain had trade interests in Central Asia, but its main concern was its “listening post” in Kashgar, established to get timely information on any Russian moves that might threaten its Indian empire. The Russians had equal but opposite interests and also installed a representative there. For the Chinese, the city became an administrative and military headquarters. So it was that Kashgar, almost equidistant from Delhi, Beijing, and Saint Petersburg, became host to a British “resident,” a Russian consul, and a Chinese governor. They rarely met but spent their time eavesdropping on one another and sending what they learned or imagined to excite the suspicions and fears of their governments. With them, the Great Game of Asian espionage moved down from the rugged Hindu Kush mountains to the pleasant gardens of Kashgar.

Alluring as the gardens may have been—all the great warriors of Asia delighted in them—the call of the wild was too strong to resist. Having solidified their position along the Ili River south of Balkhash

Lake, the Russians decided to push south. There, for the first time, they met such resistance that they were forced to pull back. But the resistance did not come from the inhabitants as in the Caucasus; it was the Chinese who stopped them. In 1884 the two powers negotiated the Treaty of Saint Petersburg to halt the Russian advance at the Ili River just north of the Tienshan. That treaty may be taken as the high point of Asian imperialism. It was to Central Asia what the Anglo-French Sykes-Picot Agreement was to the Middle East. Imperial Russia and Qing China, with Britain playing the middleman as banker for the Chinese, divided Asia between themselves.

The imperialists could then freely despise the Asians. They constituted no threat and were regarded as having no dignity. In Central Asia as elsewhere, it was the role of leading orientalists to shape these judgments. In Aceh, as I noted in Chapter 14, it was the leading Dutch scholar Christiaan Snouck Hurgronje who undermined the nationalist movement toward the end of the nineteenth century. In Central Asia, the Russian orientalist Nikolai Petrovich Ostroumov, who had gone there to edit a Tashkent periodical in 1883, stayed on after the Treaty of Saint Petersburg to advise the Russian governors-general as their in-house expert on Turkestan.[26] Such scholars were presumed to understand the natives since they were able to read their writings. At best, the policies they advocated amounted to what we might call "regime change" writ large: a reordering of the whole makeup of the conquered societies. Ostroumov and Hurgronje were the consummate espionage agents.

Then, as in other areas of the Muslim world, in part in harmony with imperialism, in part in opposition to it, and in part because of native developments, small groups of people in the cities, as they put, "awakened." They called themselves the "new people," the *Jadid.*

Inspired by the writings of Jamal al-Din al-Afghani and his followers; reading for the first time strident attacks on their backwardness and sloth by fellow Muslims and fellow victims of imperialism in periodicals like the Turkish *Terjüman* and later the *Turkistan Wilayati Gazeti,* as well as others in Arabic and Russian; moving beyond their cities and making contacts in Istanbul, Cairo, and Mecca; and browsing books in newly opened bookstores, they found a new world. As the American historian of Central Asia Adeeb Khalid has written,

> The significance of the new writing then appearing in Tatar, Ottoman and Arabic in shaping the worldviews of educated Central Asians was central. The new bookstores operated by the Jadids in the major cities of Central Asia stocked books published in India, Iran, Istanbul, Cairo and Beirut as well as the various Muslim publishing centers of the Russian empire.[27]

New voices began to be heard, including many that sounded in poetry. The first to popularize the idea of Uyghur nationalism was a man known as Abdulhalik, who adopted the name Uyghur. Like writers elsewhere in the global South, he called on his people to "wake up." A contemporary from Samarqand, Mahmud Khoja ibn Behbud, writing under the name Behbudi, founded and edited a newspaper, itself a revolutionary development in Central Asia, and spread the message Abdulhalik had sounded: the people must awake. They must acquire what was needed from the West and bring it into Islam. In effect, they were echoing the message of al-Afghani.

Al-Afghani had to try to convince rulers, but Behbudi, Abdulhalik, and those who listened to them were given an opportunity that al-Afghani never had: the 1917 Bolshevik revolution swept away the most dangerous of the three imperial powers, Russia. Since many people in the Seven Cities had always looked to their cousins in the city-states in the Russian empire for leadership, they rushed to Tashkent to hold the First Turkestan Muslim Conference. The next year they made Tashkent the capital of what they proclaimed to be an autonomous Soviet republic.

This entry into the Soviet sphere had not been the aim of the educated new men, and they pulled apart to form a rival Muslim government in Khoqand. The "Reds" helped secure the Tashkent "republic," while the "Whites" supported the Khoqand state. The Reds turned out to be far more organized and were buoyed by a different sort of jadid—workers on the newly created railway. Nothing like massed laborers had ever entered the social and political affairs of Central Asia, and they overpowered the Khoqand government. Amid atrocities on both sides, the people fell under the rule of warlords.

Tashkent emerged as the less defeated of the two groups. The local Bolsheviks there, reunited with the less conservative of the new men, proclaimed the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. "Republic" had become a new name for imperial domination, but given temporary freedom of action amid revolts, invasions from both Reds and Whites, raids by warlords, and near starvation, it managed briefly in 1921 to hold a conference to proclaim the birth of the nation and even to coin its name: Uyghur.

The Uyghur people who remained in their cities fell under the sway of successive Chinese rulers and seem to have virtually fallen silent until well after the Second World War. It was not until about 1949 that the People's Republic of China picked up where the Qing rulers had left off. Playing the Uyghurs and Kazakhs against one another, the Chinese Communists continued the colonial policies of the Qing, transferring large numbers of Han Chinese into Central Asia in a strategy "designed to incorporate Xinjiang into China politically,

socially and economically. . . . China's hard policy of settling a massive number of ethnic Hans in Xinjiang has convinced Uyghurs that they must find a way to resist this influx before the sea of Han immigrants fully overwhelms them."[28]

It nearly did overwhelm them shortly. During the Chinese Cultural Revolution, about two million Han Chinese moved to Xinjiang. The Chinese understood that in semidesert conditions, the control of water was key to politics. They persecuted those who controlled water and distributed their lands to the peasantry. "In this way, it [the Communist Chinese regime] eliminated many of the educated and powerful elements of local Turkic society and sought to win the support of the masses," but, instead of winning support, the Chinese moves so terrified the Uyghurs and even their Kazakh rivals that some 60,000 to 120,000 fled to what was then Soviet-controlled Kazakhstan.[29] As Justin Rudelson and William Jankowiak commented,

> Those minorities [who remained behind in Chinese-controlled cities] who had relatives in the Soviet Union faced struggle sessions and were frequently exposed on trumped-up charges as "spies" by their own neighbors and sent to labor camps for years. The Cultural Revolution's policies on the Xinjiang oases [the Seven Cities] included the abolition of private landholding, the closing of rural bazaars, attacks on Islam, and forcible acculturation and assimilation. All of this engendered among the minorities a profound resentment and antigovernmental distrust that endure to the present.[30]

The Uyghurs found that all means of peaceful discussion, much less resolution, of their fears were closed to them. Increasingly after 1990, they have turned to violent action, in response to which the Chinese government has killed thousands of Uyghurs.

Both the Uyghurs and the Chinese government linked events in Xinjiang to those in Afghanistan. Among the jihadis fighting first the Russians and later the Americans were numbers of Uyghurs. Meanwhile, in Central Asia, Uyghurs founded militant groups on the pattern of al-Qaida. The Chinese government tried to suppress them and even joined with the US government in their actions. They were delighted when the US Department of State put one of the Uyghur resistance groups on its terrorist list. What had started as a quest for national independence turned, in default of any other means of action, to terrorism.

As the Australian historian of Central Asia David Brophy has summarized the current dilemma of the Uyghurs, in the face of Chinese repression, there looks to be

> a religious revival in Xinjiang. . . . Repressive religious policies will inevitably create the necessary conditions to redefine the struggle in Xinjiang as a jihad. Close surveillance of the mosque, restrictions on observance of religious festivals, and the policing of Islamic dress, all have come to the fore recently

> as sources of resentment and sparks for public protest . . . and if Uyghurs feel that self-styled nationalist leaders have failed them, they will look elsewhere for the means to resist.[31]

They have. As repression goes its dreary way in Central Asia, the Uyghurs seem to be firmly launched on a pattern of resistance that echoes what is happening in other parts of the Muslim world. Many Muslims have lost their jobs, their freedom, and even their lives in order to be themselves and practice their religion in what they perceive to be their homeland. Many Uyghurs have come to believe that their only line of defense against massive Chinese colonization and the destruction of their cultural identity is political activism anchored in Islam.[32]

PART FIVE

Militant Islam

In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Muslims tried to organize their reaction to imperialism. First, the rulers of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and India copied what they understood to be the sources of European power. Some of what they did appears to us as simply superficial, like dressing their soldiers in Western-style uniforms. But, superficial or not, the imperial powers would not permit them to protect nascent industry or modernize military forces. In response, religious leaders dug deeper into their traditions, particularly the traditions that had evolved after the devastating invasions of Genghis Khan's Mongols. Sufi orders took up the defensive role in Indonesia, Somalia, Libya, the Caucasus, Algeria, and Morocco. One after another each of these efforts failed to stop the invasion of the imperial powers.

Reacting to this failure and pinning responsibility for it on the religious establishment, thinkers picked up the then-current European fascination with nationalism and tried to define themselves under its aegis. From roughly 1900 until about 1970, nationalism was the banner under which would-be liberators rallied. Profiting from the decline of support for imperialism in the North of the world, nationalists in Indonesia, Somalia, Iran, Turkey, the Levant, and North African nation-states thought they had found the formula for independence. Catastrophic defeats of the Middle Eastern Arab states forced a reevaluation of the creed and the practice. Nationalism itself was virtually discarded as a suitable ideology.

Then, after a period of confusion, a new pattern was set by militant groups, modeled on the Muslim Brotherhood, and fundamentalist Islam was reasserted, inspired by the Egyptian theologian Sayyid Qutb. Read by tens of millions of Muslims, Qutb is the ideologue of the move toward a reassertion of Islamic fundamentalism. It was this combination of organization and ideology that was picked up by Usama bin Ladin and spread in Afghanistan and throughout the Sunni Muslim world in response first to Russian imperialism and then to

American intervention.

Indeed, as I seek to make clear, these recent moves are stages in processes that have deep historical roots. Some of the most spectacular movements of today, in fact, long predate the ideologies and structures to which they identify themselves. Thus, as the reader will see, the Moro “rebellion” is now more than a century old, and the Somalia insurgency and the Boko Haram movement in Nigeria were in large part a direct and proximate response to imperialism.

Meanwhile, and parallel to events in other parts of the Muslim world, Iran was led by its foremost religious leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, into revolution. Drawing on Qutb’s philosophy, he created a Shiah version of the theocracy the Muslim Brothers sought.

The aim of this part of the book is to show how these evolving ideas and actions led step by step to the anger and frustration of the Muslims and to violence by some of their adherents. While the groups mostly began as separate movements, they have tended to coalesce and to transcend cultural differences and vast distances to form more or less similar movements, in which the peoples of the South of the world are grouped around individuals. However, while the reader will find many of their ideas and practices similar, the groups themselves are often in conflict with one another. A fundamental issue all have had to address, however, is whether the achievement of some sort of unity depends on the acquisition of a homeland (as the leadership of the Islamic State have argued) or whether it can be achieved in a less tangible form (as the leadership of al-Qaida believe). The opponents of the militants find it easier to attack the statists since they present a fixed target, whereas, so far at least, the ideologues have spread widely through Africa and Asia.

What the reader should particularly note is that the ideology of reaction to the residue of imperialism is powerful, diffuse, and self-perpetuating, despite the large-scale and apparently successful opposition mounted, with help from the North, against it. This section of the book prepares the way to consider, as I will in Part 6, what might be done to create a world in which Muslims and Christians, Hindus and Jews, peoples of the North and the South, can find the means to live in reasonable peace and security.

CHAPTER 38

The Moro "Rebellion" in the Philippines

When Ferdinand Magellan arrived in the Philippines in 1521, most of the population was Muslim, having been converted, like the peoples of the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, and Java, by Arab and Persian traders. As in Indonesia, the vast number of islands—the Philippines had more than seven thousand—also supported a large Buddhist population, who had been converted by Chinese merchants. Both areas also contained hundreds of other native ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups. The Spaniards, as they began their conquest of the Philippines, were not much concerned with the traditional or pagan groups or with the Buddhists, but they looked on the Muslims as enemies. They considered the local Muslims another branch of the Arabs and Berbers they had fought for centuries in Spain, so they called them "Moros."

In fact the Philippine Moros were natives who had converted to Islam only a century or two before Magellan landed. Once introduced, the religion had spread quickly, and by the time the Spaniards arrived, Muslim societies had coalesced into kingdoms. Some of these were large and thriving, with vigorous cultures. Those that were situated in the north on the island of Luzon were immediately attacked by the Spaniards. Spanish policy toward the Moros on Luzon—essentially the same one they had learned in the Azores and carried out in the Caribbean—was simple: genocide. They had two powerful weapons. First, they were armed with cannon and protected by steel armor, whereas the natives, like their descendants for the next four centuries, fought mainly with swords and were protected only by wooden or woven fiber shields. The second weapon was more subtle but ultimately more powerful. Accompanying the Spanish warriors were priests whom they encouraged to convert the natives to Catholicism.

Those the Spaniards did not convert or kill, they drove away from what became their major base on Luzon. The little village of Manila became the anchor of one of the great trade routes of imperial Spain.

From its port, the *galeónes de Manila* (Manila galleons) were loaded with spices and luxury goods that had been transshipped from India or China and sent on the trade winds across the Pacific to Acapulco on their way to Spain. That trade was the principal reason the Spaniards were in the Philippines. The rest of the country was of secondary importance.

But the Spaniards also needed timber to build and repair ships. And the best shipbuilding timber, dense and impervious teak, was available mainly in the jungles of the south. So to support the galleon trade, they had to deal with the coastal port towns or sultanates on the southern island of Mindanao.[1] They could not safely carry on that trade unless they could suppress the local armed traders and privateers. Their experience with the "other" Moors—the "Barbary pirates"—set their policy. They sometimes paid protection money to privateers, but often they used their superior firepower to sink any native praus they encountered. That was sufficient to enable them to get from the south the timber they needed. Local merchants were willing to swap their timber for trade goods, just as the American Indians swapped their furs for beads or pieces of iron. The Spaniards generally restricted their activities to the coast. There they were safe and could deal with local merchants who brought timber to them. When they could not get what they wanted, they employed their steel-encased soldiers and the Christian Philippine militia they recruited to conduct search-and-destroy missions into the interior jungle, but apparently such ventures were rare. Then, in the nineteenth century, they began a more aggressive policy. They continued to use raids, but they also sought to win local allies. In 1836, they did as they had done with the Barbary pirates: they executed a treaty setting out "Capitulations of Peace, Protection and Commerce" with "the most Excellent Sultan and Datus [noblemen of the sultan's court] of Sulu." In effect, the treaty constituted recognition of the Muslim state.[2]

The motivation for this change of policy has never been explained. The northern area, mainly Luzon, had long since been converted to Christianity. The few Muslims who remained there constituted no threat to Spanish interests. And, in the south on Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago, the old policy worked at acceptable cost—timber was acquired to build or repair the galleons. And the trend was in the favor of Spanish rule because the Muslim population had virtually withered away. As a result of the introduction of diseases against which the Filipinos had no immunity, Muslims had been reduced from over 50 percent of the population to about 5 percent and pushed almost off the main Philippine islands entirely, down through Mindanao to the Sulu Archipelago and into Borneo.

Despite these considerations, the Spaniards decided about 1876 to

push into the interior. As they did, they were surprised to find how weakened the Muslims had become. Their first major target, the city of Sulu, had been abandoned. Apparently, for we have no convincing records, the Muslims had been so decimated by disease that they had given up hope of defeating the Spaniards. As in other colonial wars, what disease did not accomplish, the arms revolution did. The Spaniards had acquired relatively mobile cannon and breech-loading rifles.

Resistance did not completely cease, but the Spaniards were effectively in control of at least those parts of Mindanao that they regarded as worth ruling. That was in essence the status when America invaded the Philippines in 1898.

The first target of the American invaders was the Spanish military. On Luzon, the Americans easily defeated the Spanish forces while the American fleet blockaded the scattered Spanish bases throughout the islands and particularly on Mindanao. Without any system of resupply, the Spaniards were unable to defend themselves, and the Moros rushed to take revenge and recoup their lost territory. They attacked every Spanish position in Mindanao, Sulu, and other southern islands. Whether or not they saw the Americans as liberators, the Moros seized the opportunity the Americans had given them. Like the leaders of the insurgent groups in the Catholic north, they asserted their independence. To win it, they sought American support. The first actions of their most established political authority on Sulu, the sultan, showed that he wanted an alliance against the hated Spaniards. He offered America a treaty giving his state autonomy. He was soon disabused.

As they had already shown in the Christian north, the Americans had an entirely different objective. They were not guided by a concern with religion, either Christian or Muslim; they had embraced the imperial objective: they wanted a colony. As both the Christians in the north and the Muslims in the south began to realize the American objective, they began to resist. They had few means of resistance: the outgoing Spaniards abandoned some arms, but they had long devoted themselves to making sure that natives did not know either how to use them or how to organize themselves. From their long wars against the Native Americans, the incoming Americans were adept at both.

In the first stages of the conflict, the Americans concentrated on the Christian insurgents and adopted the tactics of the contemporary English theorist of counter-guerrilla warfare Charles E. Callwell, whose book *Small Wars* had been published in London in 1896. It advocated what was thought of as a Spanish style of counterinsurgency: “Chastise the rebels in their homes. . . . To bring them to reason he [the imperialist] must reach them through their

crops, their flocks, and their property . . . depriving them of their belongings or burning their dwellings."[3] Only thus could the insurgents be forced into battles in which they could be destroyed by the occupier's superior forces. Sending out "flying columns" as Callwell had advised, the Americans destroyed dozens of villages.

In testimony before the Senate Committee on the Philippines in January 1902, Brigadier General Robert Patterson Hughes, the provost marshal general of Manila, answered questions on the nature of the counterinsurgency. Essentially, he echoed Callwell. The burning of village housing was done as a punishment, he said. Pressed by Senator Joseph Rawlins, who stated that "the punishment in that case would fall, not upon the men, who could go elsewhere, but mainly upon the women and little children," General Hughes replied, "The women and children are part of the family, and where you wish to inflict a punishment you can punish the man probably worse in that way than any other." Undeterred, Senator Rawlins asked, "But is that within the ordinary rules of civilized warfare? Of course you could exterminate the family, which would be still worse punishment." To which General Hughes commented, "Those people are not civilized." [4]

The Americans made no attempt to win the hearts and minds of the natives. Wherever the incoming Americans met Filipinos, they customarily referred to them, even in their presence, with the racial taunts they had brought from America. It made no difference whether the Filipinos were Christian or Muslim, or even serving the Americans as auxiliary soldiers or police. They referred to all Filipinos as "niggers" or employed one of those other words—"geesers," "coons," "gooks," "wops," "ragheads"—Americans use so easily and crudely. In the Philippines, the least impolite word for the natives was "gugus."[5]

It was not only Filipinos who were treated this way. Black American soldiers, sent overseas in segregated units, were taunted as well. The American military governor requested that black soldiers not be sent to him and observed that white soldiers refused to salute black officers and sometimes jeered them, shouting, "What are you coons doing here?" A few American blacks grew so angry that they deserted to the Filipinos.

The American soldiers' treatment of the Filipinos reflected their dehumanizing language. The natives were often subjected to torture. In later hearings US senators were told of the tortures commonly employed by American troops—the favorite, sounding a very modern note, was the "water cure," in which buckets of water were forced down a captive's throat and then forced out by men kneeling on his stomach. When they could retaliate, Filipino insurgents burned or hacked to death captured Americans. Terror bred terror. Even such restraint as existed in the north, where the insurgents were Christian,

lapsed in the south, where they were Muslims. American troops were armed with better weapons than the Spaniards, light, mobile cannon, the Maxim machine gun, and mortars, while the Muslim guerrillas still had only the short sword known as a kris or an agricultural tool known as the barong or bolo.[6] The American policy was to accept no surrender; Muslim fighters and those civilians who were with them were slaughtered.

As in the Spanish resistance to Napoleon's invasion and the Moroccan resistance to the Spaniards, guerrillas fought both as organized bands, not really armies but rather hastily gathered groups of peasants, and also as individual suicide fighters (*fidayin,* popularly spelled "fedayeen"). The Spaniards had called the Moro fighters *juramentados,* from the Spanish word for "taking an oath." Each suicide fighter publicly vowed to fight to the death against the Spanish troops and their Philippine Christian auxiliaries. American officers were astonished at their suicidal bravery. The Americans painfully discovered that even when hit by round after round of pistol fire, the barefoot and seminaked fidayin kept charging.[7] Like their cousins in Afghanistan and elsewhere, the fidayin in the Philippines would later discover how to make and employ improvised explosive devices (IEDs), but they never put aside the kris or the barong.

Throughout the period of Spanish imperialism, there had been no Moro nation.[8] Despite their geographical and linguistic divisions, however, the Moros did apparently have a sense of nationhood for which they had a name. It was *bangsa,* and they called their sense of nationhood *bangsamoro.*

An American army unit traps roughly a thousand unarmed Muslim villagers in the bed of an extinct volcano during the March 1906 Bud Dajo massacre in the Philippines; according to the *New York Times,* only six survived ("Women and Children Killed in Moro Battle," March 11, 1906). *Source:* US National Archive.

The Filipino Muslims were organized into sultanates, as early nineteenth-century Europeans were organized into principalities, and like the Europeans they were sharply divided and mutually hostile. Just as there was no single Italy or Germany, there was no single Moro nation-state, but just as the Italians and Germans had a sense of cultural identity, so did Filipino Muslims in bangsamoro. An island people with a tradition of seafaring, the Moros also shared language and customs with their Muslim neighbors in Malaysia, Sumatra, and Borneo.

During their occupation, the Americans thought of the sultanate of Sulu as they had thought of the Native American tribal confederations. As the Supreme Court had put it, Native Americans were a "domestic dependent nation."[9] To implement this concept in the Philippines, the American occupation authorities offered the sultan of Sulu, the only Muslim authority with whom they dealt, what was known as the Bates Treaty of October 27, 1899. The Bates Treaty, like many of those made with Native Americans, awarded sovereignty to the United States but specified that the Sulu "religion"—Islam was not mentioned—and other customs would be respected. On purely internal matters, the Sulus would be authorized to enforce their own law code.

The Moro law code, known as the "Selection" (*Luwaran*), was based on a reading of the Shariah but had been edited to include only those laws—suitably modified—that fit the needs of the Philippine Moro community. Since the Moros were not trained in the Muslim legal tradition and did not speak Arabic, the Luwaran was written in Malay, but in the Arabic alphabet.[10] As their first serious observer, the Lebanese American official Najeeb Saleeby, wrote,

> In making the Luwaran the Mindanao judges selected such laws as in their judgment suited the conditions and the requirements of order in Mindanao. They used the Arabic text as a basis, but constructed their articles in a concrete form, embodying genuine examples and incidents of common occurrence in Mindanao. In some places they modified the sense of the Arabic so much as to make it agree with the prevailing customs of their country. In a few instances they made new articles which do not exist in Arabic but which conform to the national customs and common practices. The authority of the Luwaran is universally accepted in Mindanao and is held sacred next to that of the Quran. The Mindanao judge is at liberty to use either of them as his authority for the sentence to be rendered, but as a rule a quotation from the Quran bearing on the subject is desirable.[11]

In a speech to the American community, Saleeby elaborated, saying that "the Moros have well-defined governmental organization and a

well-recognized knowledge of written law. . . . [But they] are greatly disunited. There is no community of thought or feeling among the Moro districts. Each district is inhabited by a different tribe and these tribes have never been united. Indeed, there is no district, not even Sulu, which can effect the union of all its datuships.[12] The Moros are really in a pitiful state of political disunion and are actually helpless against modern forces and military organizations. But though it be easy to defeat them in battle, it is a completely different proposition to occupy their land and colonize their country."[13]

As the French had done in Algeria, the Russians had done in the Caucasus, and the Chinese were doing in Central Asia, the American administrators hit on a program to control the Muslims that was cheaper than combat: they encouraged migration of politically reliable colonists into their area. In the Philippines, these reliable colonists were northern Christians. To get them to move into the Muslim areas of Mindanao, the American administration offered them land. Of course, what they offered was land the local Muslims regarded as theirs. This colonial, as distinct from imperial, policy led to sporadic uprisings throughout the "pacification period" of the 1920s and 1930s. As the editors of the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* wrote,

> The US colonial government systematized and regulated the whole process of land ownership, land registration, cadastral survey, homesteading and agricultural investments. Through class legislation and discriminatory processes, the ancestral lands and economic resources of the Moros and Lumad[14] would gradually drift into the hands of Christian Filipino settlers and large US corporations. More importantly, the Moros . . . would also lose their right to govern themselves according to their own systems as their territories were systematically incorporated into the bureaucracy of the Philippine colony. Their once sovereign states in the form of the sultanates were reduced into mere provinces of the colonial government and later incorporated into the Philippine Republic. It must be noted that during American imperial rule, various Moro leaders voiced out their desire for their homeland to be granted independence. In 1934 and 1935 for instance, in the midst of Filipino-American negotiations for independence, Maranao leaders sent various petitions to Filipino and American authorities for a separate independence grant. As expected, these petitions were ignored.[15]

The US government, working with "the Filipino elites who dominated the state, many of them coming from powerful landed families [who] were facing unrest from landless peasants in the north," to determine the shape of the state, ruled that all "unregistered lands [were] subject to the ownership and control of the state." That is, the American authorities and the incoming government followed almost exactly the policy the British and their Iraqi puppets followed in Iraq in the early 1930s. In the Philippines, "tens of thousands of poor, landless, mostly Christian families took the offer,

driven less by government prodding than by desperation."[16]

In the Second World War, when the Americans and their administration disappeared, the Japanese had a chance to win over the Moros as they had won over the Indonesian Muslims. They did not take it. They were more concerned with products than with politics, and it was not long before the Moros directed their armed opposition against the Japanese. The best-known opposition group, the Communist-led Hukbalahop, was in the north, but there is no record of Muslim cooperation with them. Ideologically they were far apart. Separately, however, each movement tied down large numbers of Japanese troops and fought bloody insurgencies.[17]

The brutality of the Japanese set the basis for the Moro people's growing sense of corporate identity. Being uniformly brutalized, they began to react uniformly.[18] When the American armed forces reappeared and some elements of the former administration began to reassert themselves, the Moros slowly moved toward political action. It took about ten years for a group of recognized leaders of the various Muslim groups to form a political movement. Probably the main reason for the long gestation period, despite the wartime experience of militancy, was that the Moro people were divided into a dozen or more groups scattered throughout the Philippines. No group any longer controlled a territory, and except on the islands of the far south, each was a minority. Another reason the sense of community evolved so slowly was the enmity of the Christian government, which acted toward the Muslims in the pattern established by the Spanish and continued by the Americans: the Muslims were foreigners, a distinct native people to be merely tolerated when not actually fought, and to be gradually pushed away from the real, that is, the Christian, nation and its territory.

Paradoxically, it was an attempt by the government of Ferdinand Marcos to use the Muslims to accomplish a military objective that appears to have crystallized the resistance. The particulars of the event have never been satisfactorily revealed, but it appears that the government recruited a group of about fifty young Muslims and was training them to sabotage neighboring Indonesia. Something went wrong—it has never been established what—and the Marcos government decided to "liquidate" the force. The army (which was of course Christian) massacred the Muslim recruits on March 18, 1968. The "Jabidah" incident, as it was known, was seen as so blatantly anti-Muslim that Malaysia broke diplomatic relations with the Philippines.

Domestically, a former provincial governor, a *datu,* by the name of Udtog Matalam proclaimed an independence movement. It was the seedbed of a movement that eventually led to the formation of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), founded by Nur Misurai in

1969.[19] A flamboyant figure, Misurai dodged among the Muslim states of Southeast Asia and the Moro enclaves of the Philippines. Neither he nor his associates fully articulated the MNLF's aim, but it was termed bangsamoro, which appears best understood as an ethnically—but not territorially—defined nation-state.

The MNLF and other groups began to wage a low-level insurgency in the far south, apparently as a means to attract attention to their plight. They caught attention, but not where they expected it. In 1976, the Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi summoned representatives of the Philippine government and the MNLF to Tripoli and got them to agree to the creation of autonomous regions in areas of Muslim preponderance, in exchange for an end to what was becoming a civil war. The deal did not satisfy the more militant religious faction in the MNLF, which was led by a man known as Hajji Hashim Salamat.

Salamat was a dedicated Muslim revolutionary. In 1958 he had joined a group to make the pilgrimage to Mecca. After a year of studies there he went to Cairo, where he attended the Islamic Azhar University. Two happenings during that period were to have a determining impact on his life and a major impact on events in the Philippines: he met and apparently became the leader of a group of Filipino students, and he fell under the sway of the Egyptian "philosopher of the revolution," Sayyid Qutb.

When Salamat returned to the Philippines, he joined the MNLF, but when it accepted the Libyan deal in 1977, he led a dissident faction into exile. This group, establishing itself first in Egypt and then in Pakistan, renamed itself the Moro Islamic (instead of National) Liberation Front (MILF).[20] Presumably Salamat or one of his associates made contact with Qaddafi, won him over from his previous support for the MNFL, and persuaded him to supply the funds that enabled Salamat to establish his movement. It would ultimately lead the armed struggle against the Philippine government in conjunction with other breakaways from the MNLF, including an even more violent group known as Abu Sayyaf (the possessors of swords).

Meanwhile, after a long series of conflicts and contacts, the Philippine government agreed in 1996 to establish a semiautonomous region in Muslim-majority areas. The MNFL leader Misurai was made governor but was unable to control his followers, who continued to press for better terms. So fighting continued. The next year a further agreement was reached but was overturned by the Philippine Army. In short, both the Muslim radicals and the increasingly politicized army leaders were opposed to any sort of agreement. Fighting continued in the south—far enough away and sufficiently isolated that it had little impact on Philippine politics or civic life. But the radical Muslim group MILF declared a jihad against the government and by this time

had acquired a paramilitary force, said to have numbered about six hundred men, many of whom had fought against the Russians in Afghanistan.

The new administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo that began in 2001 made a new effort to reach some sort of agreement to end the insurgency. This time the negotiation was successful. The Moros were to be given limited autonomy in their "ancestral domain." The agreement was to be signed on August 5, 2008, but the day before, the Philippine Supreme Court issued a restraining order and subsequently declared the deal unconstitutional. That ruling plunged the country into a full-scale civil war.

The war was much more violent than previous encounters. The government threw a large part of its army into Mindanao, where government soldiers killed an unknown number of Muslims and turned more than half a million inhabitants into refugees. On its side, the MILF was weakened by charges that its leaders had been tricked by the government into selling out the cause. Attacking the MILF because it had been willing to accept limited autonomy, a breakaway group headed by Ameril Umbra Kato demanded full independence. As in many insurgent movements, the former radicals, the MILF, faced even more radical challengers. Two of these, who put themselves in the lead of the insurgency, included skilled and dedicated *jihadis* who had learned about war by fighting in Afghanistan. The Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters and the group known as Abu Sayyaf both pledged allegiance to the Islamic State in 2014. Meanwhile, the original parent group, MILF, reached a deal with the government on March 27, 2014, promising that in return for an autonomous zone it would give up its weapons and act as a political party.

The lessons of the long-running conflict, I think, are three: first, it is very dangerous to try to deprive a people of a sense of national existence, even if the group in question is small and has only a limited sense of its own identity. The fighting has cost the lives of about a million people and has caused terrible suffering for two or three times that many.

The second lesson is that in any insurgent war, both defenders and challengers feel obliged to take positions that often endanger the civic order they are trying to protect. In the Philippine conflict, the national army endangered Philippine civic order with its increasing determination to score a "win." We saw the same progression in Algeria, where the French Army nearly destroyed the French Republic, and its dissident group, the Secret Army Organization, tried to kill the country's president, Charles de Gaulle. While the Philippine Army got more radical and dangerous to the government, the insurgents split into more radical and dangerous groups. The longer insurgency and

counterinsurgency continue, the more extreme these trends become.

The third lesson is that with intelligence, understanding, and bravery, the causes of insurgency can be meaningfully addressed. As they are resolved, order and security can be reestablished. This has proved to be a difficult but not impossible task.[21]

CHAPTER 39

Somalia, the "Failed State"

Long before the coming of Islam, Somali sailors plied the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. From a dozen or so little ports along the coast, fishers and traders were in contact with Arabia, the east coast of Africa down to Zanzibar, and probably across to India long before we have any records of it. Little is known of their first contacts with Islam, but it appears that it came about through commerce. Somalia was passed by in the seventh-century thrust of the Arab armies to the northeast and northwest, but in the following centuries, several of its ports became thriving city-states. Jostling against one another, they found in Islam a means to amalgamate into sultanates.

The form Somali Islam took, shaped by Sufi brotherhoods, resembled developments in Libya, Kashmir, Indonesia, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. In Somalia, these brotherhoods fitted into and took on the characteristics of the existing clans. But whereas the clans engaged, as they still do, in violent competition with no one clan able to dominate the rest, one Sufi brotherhood, the Salihiyah, came close to establishing unity among them.

As the coastal people spread inland, the Sufi brotherhoods converted the nomads and capitalized on their military potential. With Ottoman help, the most impressive of the early Muslim kingdoms, based in Mogadishu, grew strong enough to invade Ethiopia in 1529. The Ethiopians turned to their fellow Christian Portuguese for help, thus starting the first of the Christian-Muslim or North-South wars in East Africa.

Except for Ethiopia, which was a nation-state from medieval times, the Horn of Africa and interior regions of what became the states of Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, and Sudan were made up of village communities divided by language. The lines on this map are the product of the "scramble for Africa" and were set by European imperialists without reference to African societies or geography.

The Portuguese had long fought Muslims in West Africa as they plunged down the coast in their quest for gold and slaves, but their involvement in East Africa was a momentary aberration. Their quest was for spices, which were to be found not there but in South India and Indonesia. So they paid little further attention to the Somalis or the Ethiopians; their Dutch and British successors did the same. It was not until the nineteenth century that the British found something of value in the area around Mogadishu: its merchants could gather animals from the nomadic tribes and ship them to feed British troops and sailors stationed at their naval base in Aden.

In his usual colorful style, the great English traveler and translator of *The Arabian Nights* Richard Burton described Somalia as though it were a modern site for the Crusades.[1] When in January 1855 he reached the ancient city of Harar, considered the fourth-holiest city of

Islam, Burton was determined to find a wild and dangerous antique civilization even if he had to invent it. He was surprised at what he saw. The Somalis, he wrote, were not so dangerous but "are extremely bigoted, especially against Christians, the effect of their Abyssinian wars, and are fond of 'Jihading.' "[2] But they were also surprisingly cosmopolitan. Even in Harar, which he claimed to be the first European to visit, he found a collection of Muslims from distant lands —"Moroccan from Fez, a thorough-bred Persian, a boy from Meccah, a Muscat man, a native of Suez, and a citizen of Damascus: the others were Arabs from Yemen." Harar was much more in touch with the world than he expected.

In Somalia as elsewhere, the flag followed explorers—and trade. The British found that they needed to protect their food source from rival Europeans, particularly the Germans, who were developing a colony farther down the coast, and from tribal Somalis who raided and plundered, unrestrained by governmental power. To protect their interests, the British had to cope with the first Somali champion against Italian and British imperialism, Muhammad Abdullah Hassan.

Hassan benefited from the inspiration the Sufis gave to the nomadic tribes of the interior. While less organized and on a smaller scale than the Sanusiyah of Libya or the Mahdiyah of Sudan, the Somali Sufis enabled him to form a religion-based tribal state. The British called him "the Mad Mullah." We do not know what he called the British, but we know that he thought of them as virtual kidnappers of children. He was goaded into forming a state to resist them, he said, by the proselyting of Somali children by Christian missionaries, an action he saw as "stealing our future." More immediate was the danger he perceived in the advance of British and Italian military forces into the interior of the country. Assisted by Ottoman advisers, he formed a tribal army, inspired by and partly manned by members of the Salihiyah Sufi brotherhood.

Hassan's Sufi tribal army fought well against Italian and British forces in the early years of the twentieth century, but it could not prevail. It was finally defeated just after the end of the First World War, as the Wahhabi Arabian and Iraqi tribes were then also being defeated, by British aerial bombing.

The advent of aircraft made imperial victory both dramatic and inexpensive. Aerial bombing was already being put forward as the technological answer to insurgency. As the "father of the RAF," Hugh (later Lord) Trenchard, had observed in his days as an infantry officer, foot soldiers—at least at the time when they still actually walked—were inefficient in quelling revolts in remote areas. They could rarely catch guerrillas. To win wars, massive numbers had to be sent, at great expense. In the 1919–1920 campaign in Iraq, even the use of

relatively cheap infantry from India had nearly bankrupted England. As we saw in Chapter 19, Colonial Secretary Winston Churchill, realizing he could no longer justify a conventional campaign there, was willing to use poison gas, but he was not sure even that would suffice. So he turned to Trenchard for a cheaper alternative. Trenchard, who had left the infantry, learned to fly, and become head of the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War, had the answer Churchill wanted. He had become Britain's principal advocate of airpower.

The air campaign against Hassan's Somali army was the action that led to the creation of the RAF. It worked so well that the RAF was given the principal role in defeating insurgents throughout the British Empire, and its success was copied by the Spanish and French in Morocco and the Italians in Libya and Ethiopia. As Trenchard and others proclaimed, aircraft armed with machine guns and bombs could wipe out a village or bedouin encampment in half an hour. Somalia was the opening to the wars of the future. Even though the British aircraft were primitive and could not carry much armament, they were effective in destroying the insurgents' morale. Once British planes started attacking, Hassan gave up almost immediately.

Hassan had only the traditional basis for resistance, a tribal army. While he came to be regarded as a national hero, the concept of a Somali nation-state was as yet unformed. The tribesmen and Sufis were hostile to non-Muslim foreigners but lacked a sense of union among themselves. As in other colonial wars, the European powers were able to divide them and defeat them with other—to them foreign—native forces. The British created armies of natives just as they had done in India and elsewhere. In Somalia as in Transjordan, the native troops were formed into a colorful camel corps.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Somalia drew little attention from the British, but it was important to the Italians. They were captivated by the lure of imperialism, but there were few places in Africa that had not already been taken by Britain, France, Portugal, Germany, or Belgium. The Italians were already involved in Libya, but, particularly under the Fascist regime of Benito Mussolini, they set about conquering East Africa. To do so, they relied primarily on their native auxiliaries, the Corpo Zaptié.

They also began an impressive program to modernize or Europeanize the country. This led, as it did in Libya, to an influx of Italians who established small-scale industries and Western-style commerce in Mogadishu and other towns. When Mussolini ordered the invasion of Ethiopia in 1935, the Italians found a new use for Somalia. With Djibouti under French control, only Mogadishu could give them the port they needed to supply their troops. A large part of

the Italian army was sent to fight in Ethiopia, so when the Second World War broke out, and they had joined the Axis, they attacked the much-smaller British force in neighboring Somalia. This bold venture did not last long: the British drove them out after just six months and continued to rule Somalia as a protectorate during the war.

After the war, Somalia posed the same problem as Libya: What should the victors do with it? The way to handle it also seemed similar: the Allies agreed to return the former Italian-ruled area to Italy as a "trusteeship"—another of those words, like "mandate," that is employed to make colonialism sound civilized and legal. While the British retained much of their prewar area of control, they turned over parts of it to Ethiopia and Kenya. This decision, which of course they took without gauging the attitude or interests of the natives, became the first truly national issue for the new and increasingly politically conscious Somali urban elite. In response, this still-tiny group organized the first political party, the Somali Youth League.[3]

As this group gained adherents and came to feel the urging of a new form of religious nationalism, it began to put pressure on the British and Italian administrations. Faced with more urgent issues elsewhere and under increasing financial restraint, the two powers agreed in 1959 to the formation of a single nation-state.

The new state, the Somali Republic, was hobbled from the start by the division of the country into clans. The laws of the republic were almost irrelevant. What really counted politically was not the form of government but rather compromises and clashes among the clan leaders. For a while, it seemed as though compromise would win out. Euphoria was sounded by all the leaders. They began to find incentives for unification and realized that they were more likely to get what they wanted if they were more numerous. So they merged into what for them was quite exotic: political parties. In doing so, however, they did not give up their principal identity as clan members. The most impressive of their new parties, an expanded version of the Somali Youth League, was at base a federation of clans.

This federation won the majority of parliamentary seats in the first national election, in 1964. So balanced was the power structure that the incoming government was able to do almost nothing. This suited the Somalis. Each clan had always managed its own affairs. It was the idea of the parliament, not the reality, that seemed modern and gave the members prestige. So happy was everyone with the results that the same federation won the second election, in 1969. On the surface, it seemed that Somalia had made a stunning transition from colonialism to Western-style democracy.

How weak the foundation was immediately became evident when President Abdirashid Ali Shermarke was assassinated in 1969. He had

apparently tried to deal with the parliament as though he were the chief executive of a functioning government. That was not what anyone wanted. But it was not clear what could be done to restore at least the form of the system.

The strongman who emerged from the chaos, Muhammad Siad Barre, had served in both the Italian constabulary, the Zaptié, and the British colonial force. During his service he was sent to Italy, where he got advanced training at the Carabinieri College and subsequently formed a shadowy association with some Soviet military officers. He learned enough about Marxism to conclude that an enhanced role of the state in the economy would give Somalia real independence, but he shrewdly kept these thoughts to himself. By 1960, he had become deputy commander of the Somali army, which, although tiny and sparsely armed, had a monopoly of armed force and, almost as important, the ability to move around the country to project its force. In the confusion that followed the assassination of the president, Barre used his troops to carry out a coup d'état, for which he must have planned long in advance.

Taking power on October 21, 1969, Barre immediately disbanded the parliament, banned political parties, suspended the constitution, and closed the newly formed Supreme Court. But at the same time, like other military dictators, he undertook a sizable program of social development. His regime promoted programs to eradicate illiteracy, distribute land, and invest in industry. He forged ties with the Arab League and the predecessor of the African Union. At the same time, he announced that his regime would bring about a merger between Marxism and Islam. In short, Barre became Somalia's "man on horseback." His Somalia, he said in declaration after declaration, was to be guided by a progressive but acceptably orthodox version of Islam. Under the aegis of Islam, he could do more or less whatever he wanted. And the first thing he wanted was to unify the country under his rule.

He quickly discovered, as others throughout Africa and Asia had done, the power of language. Recognizing that if he tried to promote any of Somalia's languages over the others, he was more likely to cause a civil war than to unify the country, he opted instead to replace the several native dialects with a newly created national language. And he not only suppressed the dialects but also banned the commonly used foreign languages. Arabic, English, and Italian were to be replaced by Somali, which would no longer be written in the Arabic script but rather, as the Russians had done with Tatar Turkish in the early 1930s, in a modified version of the Latin alphabet. Government officials were ordered to learn it and to use it in their work, and children were taught it in schools. The effect, as in the

Russian and French language reform, makes incomprehensible the written memories of the past. All eyes were to be focused only on what the regime wanted its citizens to know.

Believing that he could count on Soviet support because of his espousal of (modified) Marxism, Barre in July 1977 invaded Somalia's neighbor and old enemy, Ethiopia, to recover what had been Somali territory. That should not have annoyed the Russians, but unfortunately for him, Ethiopia in 1974 had also undergone a coup d'état that gave it what appeared to be a real Marxist regime, not an imperfect copy flavored with Islam like his. And Ethiopia was not just a coastal strip like Somalia but rather a big country with rich natural resources and the potential to sway Egyptian politics as well. From the Soviet point of view, Ethiopia was obviously much more significant a prize than Somalia, and the Russians immediately stopped their support of Barre's government.

While the Russians were cooling toward Barre, his regime was also losing coherence. Like many postcolonial states, Somalia lacked civil institutions to balance the power of the military. Programs designed to benefit the public often failed, ambition outran resources and skills, and expenditures on the military multiplied while revenue dwindled. Foreign aid was sullenly accepted and often plundered. Corruption became endemic. Even the weather seemed to turn against the state as drought devastated whole regions. Increasingly, as it held on to power for decades, the regime relied on oppression to maintain itself. Arrest, imprisonment, torture, disappearance, and murder of actual or potential critics and rivals created pervasive fear. Savage actions were carried out indiscriminately and on a massive scale, with aerial and artillery bombardment of cities. Barre's soldiers and political police killed perhaps as many as fifty thousand Somali civilians out of a population that then numbered only about two million.

Finally, in 1991, the country collapsed into a civil war. While army officers and clan leaders organized to grab what they could or to protect what they had, Barre wisely decided to save his life. He fled, ultimately making his way to Nigeria, where, unmourned, he died of a heart attack in 1995.

Barre's fall did not, of course, solve Somalia's problems. Immediately, the former British area declared independence from the former Italian zone. While the British zone remained relatively peaceful, the major clan leaders of the Italian zone, General Muhammad Farah Aidid and Ali Mahdi Muhammad, began a murderous battle for supremacy. Desperate for money to win adherents, they looted the consignments of foreign aid, and as they fought, distribution channels became blocked and crops were not planted. The inevitable famine is thought to have killed at least a

quarter million people—about one in twenty inhabitants. Chaos, starvation, and murder moved in tandem toward what has been called "Year Zero in the Horn, 1991." [4] Reacting to the grievous humanitarian disaster, the UN Security Council in December 1992 arranged with Pakistan and Malaysia to send a military force to try to establish a modicum of peace. Aidid regarded this force as an imperial invasion, and although the UN soldiers were fellow Muslims, he attacked it.

Reacting to his attack, the American government also sent troops into Somalia. While authorized by the UN, Task Force Ranger was an American operation composed of Air Force, Army, and Navy Special Forces. They of course lacked the "cover" of Islam. Their aim was to capture Aidid and disable his military force. Their attack on Mogadishu in October 1993, which became the subject of the film *Black Hawk Down,* resulted in upwards of five thousand Somali and eighteen American casualties. Inevitably, the action increased Somali hatred of foreigners and increased hostility among the clans.

Embarrassed by the operation's failure, President Bill Clinton quickly ordered the withdrawal of the American force, and the Pakistanis and Malaysians followed. The emboldened warlords resumed fighting. Then the Somalis, on their own and without foreign assistance, did a remarkable thing: they got rid of the warlords.

Like most Africans and Asians, Somalis had given up on nationalism and even on Marxism and had fallen back on Islam. A well-known Muslim jurist, Sharif Shaikh Ahmad, in 1991 led a coalition of judges and their supporters to form an organization known as the Islamic Courts Union (Somali: Midowga Maxkamadaha Islaamiga) to restore order. Almost overnight, the union ended the fighting and reestablished security. As one American journalist commented, "The Islamic Courts Union's turbaned militiamen actually defeated Somalia's hated warlords. . . . [They made] Mogadishu safe to walk in for the first time in a generation."[5] The Norwegian specialist on Somalia Stig Jarle Hansen caught the popular feeling: "The citizens of Mogadishu were tired of the anarchy, rape, robbery, theft and murder that had been the order of the day. . . . Islam was the only belief system in Somalia that had not been discredited, and citizens went to religious leaders with their needs for protection. . . . [They] were seen as upholders of justice and fairness, since they were ostensibly dedicated to Islam." [6]

The Islamic Courts Union grew by providing legal services to the public. Fees paid by litigants were its major, and initially its sole, source of funding. With funds it received, it then followed the precedent set by the Muslim Brotherhood, Hizbullah, and other movements by providing social services to the population. And

Somalis, sick of war and corruption, flocked to join its militia. It quickly became the de facto government of almost the whole of Somalia.

However, the union was bitterly contested by the still heavily armed and cash-rich warlords, who, seeing the danger the union posed to them, overcame their rivalries and formed the Alliance for the Restoration of Peace and Counterterrorism. This organization immediately attacked the union, and again the capital, Mogadishu, became the scene of almost daily fighting. Domestically, the union and the alliance were nearly balanced, but outside intervention was at hand. Worried that the union was providing facilities for such radical Muslim groups as al-Qaida and tipped into action by the 1998 terrorist bombings of embassies in Nairobi and Dar al-Salam, the George W. Bush administration began covertly to aid the warlord alliance. Despite this foreign assistance, the warlords lost control and most fled the country.

In 2006, with the events depicted in *Black Hawk Down* still painful and American forces bogged down in the quicksand of Afghanistan and Iraq but determined to wage the "war on terror," the Bush administration encouraged the no-longer-Marxist Ethiopian government to attack Somalia. It offered cash and a virtual remake of its army with new aircraft and armor. Since the Bush administration doubted that the Ethiopians would use the new equipment effectively, it decided to participate in the campaign with American Special Forces and agents of the CIA. It was an offer Ethiopia could not refuse: money, arms, and the creation of an American shield to protect the regime. It began its unprovoked and ultimately unsuccessful invasion on July 20, 2006.

For the Somalis, the invasion was painful. Ethiopian troops engaged in widespread looting, rape, and murder. For the Americans, the results were almost exactly the opposite of what had been expected. Instead of isolating and discrediting the Islamic movement, the invasion solidified Somali anger at the global North, here represented by the United States and its Christian puppet, Ethiopia. As the *New York Times* correspondent Jeffrey Gettleman wrote after a tour of rural Somalia, "In village after village, people . . . described a widespread and longstanding reign of terror, with Ethiopian soldiers gang-raping women, burning down huts and killing civilians at will. . . . It is the same military that the American government helped train and equip."[7] The effect was to marginalize and defeat the moderate faction of the Islamic Courts Union and bring the most radical elements to the fore.

Foremost among the Somali radical elements was the youth movement that split off from the Islamic Courts Union when, under

pressure, the latter had denounced the al-Qaida movement. The Movement of Battling Youth, also known as Al-Shabab, took up the cause of the holy war.[8] Reportedly eighty-nine of its members had fought the American forces in Afghanistan. The movement was influenced by Wahhabi Islam and is generally hostile to the traditional Somali Sufi brotherhoods. It has been under virtually constant attack, and some of its leaders have been killed by American bombings from drones flying out of neighboring Kenya. Despite American military and intelligence forces' attempts to destroy it, it took control of most of southern Somalia in 2009 and has carried out terrorist attacks in Kenya.

Drone bombings have not been the only American actions. Working with cooperative Somalis, which in practice often meant the warlords and the local heirs of Barre's security police, the CIA began a program of offering rewards for information leading to the capture of dissidents and enlisted the much-hated local warlords to hunt down Muslim suspects, who, when captured, were usually turned over to the secret police.[9] Many then disappeared. The CIA and Special Forces had others incarcerated on American naval vessels operating in the Indian Ocean or the Persian Gulf. This had the effect of turning the US Navy into a collection of floating jails. American prestige nosedived and the previous affection, distant though it was, for Americans turned to hatred. Many of those who were not captured managed to escape to Yemen, where they have helped bring about a shift in nationalism toward radical Islam.[10]

Meanwhile, Somalia came under an unrelated attack from another direction. Giant fishing trawlers had taken advantage of the breakdown of Somali governmental institutions to destroy the livelihood of a large part of Somali society, the small-scale native fishers. According to Gettleman, foreign fishing fleets employed "dirty fishing tactics, like dynamiting reefs or employing giant, waterborne vacuums to suck up everything from the ocean floor—the fish, the coral, the rocks, the plants—decimating not just that year's catch but future generations as well." The trawlers also dumped overboard barrels of toxic waste that washed up on Somali shores. Crews on the huge ships occasionally, possibly for sport, terrorized the native fishers on their small boats by shooting at them. Deprived of their means of earning a living, Gettleman wrote, "many part-time fishermen graduated to full-time piracy."[11]

In the eyes of Somalis, the North was as deeply implicated in the seaborne invasion as in the Ethiopian land invasion. European governments subsidized the invasive fishing fleets (which also operate off Nigeria and other Muslim countries) with about $35 billion yearly. In response to the acts of piracy, the navies of the United States and

European countries stationed powerful warships off the Somali coast, not to hunt down the illegal trawlers but to hunt down the fishers-turned-pirates. The Somali government proved incapable of taking the issue effectively to the World Court or otherwise protecting itself.[12]

Somalia today is a crippled society that bitterly hates the North. So strong is the feeling against all foreigners that even aid workers, sent to Somalia to help in such benign activities as health care, are now targets. Somalia is a "failed state," with a social contract that at least in part was shredded by foreign actions. America did not create terrorism in Somalia—the warlords did that—but Somalis' hatred of the warlords has now been redirected toward the North and particularly toward America. The Shabab movement has announced its plan to engage in jihad wherever it can, including in America, and appears to have decided to shift its allegiance at least partly from the relatively conservative al-Qaida movement to the Islamic caliphate.

CHAPTER 40

Boko Haram and Nigeria

Among the thirty or so groups or movements that acknowledge a connection with al-Qaida or the Islamic State, the most exotic is Boko Haram. Far from the concerns of most of the world, it dominates the heart of Africa. The history of Boko Haram illustrates the sequence that begins with the foreign conquest of a traditional society and the imposition of imperial rule, leads to the proclamation of independence and then to the echo of imperial rule in a corrupt native tyranny, and finally results in violent Islamic extremism.[1]

The region that now includes northeastern Nigeria, parts of southern Niger, western Chad, and northern Cameroon once made up the empire of Bornu, which existed from the fourteenth century to the middle of the nineteenth century. It was ruled throughout this time by a single dynasty, the longest-lasting one in world history. But, as dynasties do, it weakened and lost the religious élan that had enabled it to proclaim itself a caliphate. A newer arrival, the neighboring Fulani state, alleged that the rulers of Bornu had strayed from the Sunnah and proclaimed a jihad against it. The Fulani forces defeated the Bornu army in 1810 and burned its capital. Lacking other means to defend the remains of his state, the sultan called for help from a respected Muslim scholar, Muhammad Irshid ibn Muhammad al-Kamanii, who had been born in the Libyan Sahara.[2]

Nigeria is one of the most corrupt and brutal states of Africa. The south became mainly Christian in the nineteenth century, while the north and northeast remained Muslim. Boko Haram—roughly, "Westernization is forbidden"—holds out in the far northeast.

Al-Kamanii may have been associated with the Sufi order then being established throughout the Sahara by Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Sanusi. Whether he was taught by Sanusi or emulated him from afar, al-Kamanii would play a role in Central African affairs similar to Sanusi's across North Africa. Like Sanusi, he was primarily a religious scholar, but instead of founding an order, he essentially took over what was left of the empire of Bornu after 1810. He was not named the ruler but exercised power through his status as "the prince of the faithful," the *amir al-muiminin,* which is the essential attribute of a caliph. Standing aloof from the sultan, he also took over the defense of the state. Remarkably, he stopped the Fulani invasion by appealing to Islamic brotherhood. Muslims, he set forth in a *fatwa*, must never fight fellow Muslims. The Fulanis, who had justified their war on religious grounds, were stopped in their tracks.

It was not only the Africans who were impressed. The first English

travelers to visit al-Kamanii's Central African capital wrote that he had "all the qualifications for a great commander; an enterprising genius, sound judgment, features engaging, with a demeanor gentle and conciliating: and so little of vanity was there mixed with his ambition, that he refused the offer of being made sultan."[3] But whatever his diplomatic or theological skills, they could not be copied by his successors. Intrepid English travelers were soon followed by the British army.

The British army came first to the coastal areas of what is now southern Nigeria in the 1880s. The French and Germans were also pushing into the inland territories in what European imperialists were calling "the scramble for Africa." None of the political figures of the great powers was concerned with the fate of the Africans, but Chancellor Otto von Bismarck was worried that the rivalry in Africa might cause a war among the European powers, so he summoned a conference to divide Africa among them. Representatives of Britain, France, Germany, and Portugal, as well as King Leopold of Belgium, representing himself, met in Berlin in 1884 and 1885 to divide the continent. The meeting was imperialism made manifest.

The European powers acknowledged Britain's hegemony over (among other areas) northern Nigeria. The British government codified the arrangement in a "protectorate"—another euphemism for "colony"—and, to exploit it, the British founded a miniature clone of the late East India Company. The Royal Niger Company raised its own army under the command of Frederick Lugard, one of those remarkable Englishmen who drew straight lines across the map of Africa. Armed with that great instrument of imperialism, the Maxim machine gun, the West African Frontier Force took over all of Nigeria in a bloody five-year campaign. Victory came easily but profit did not, so the company sold itself to the British government in 1900.[4] The owners did far better in this deal than British taxpayers.

In 1914, just as the First World War was beginning, the British merged Northern and Southern Nigeria, along with the small colony of Lagos, into a single colony. For the next half century they ruled Nigeria primarily through quasi-autonomous local "chiefs." The two parts of what had been the protectorate had very different historical experiences. While the north was made up of autonomous Muslim theocracies that had little contact with Europe, the south had long been open to outside influence. The practice of slavery, promoted by Spain and Portugal in the sixteenth century and carried on by Britain, France, and America in the eighteenth, was not banned in Nigeria until 1936. The two regions were divided religiously as well: Christian missionaries converted millions of natives in the southern wetlands, while the inhabitants of the dry northern lands remained Muslim.

After a half century of rule, during which time they did little to integrate the two parts or create viable national institutions and effectively precluded natives from acquiring experience in managing national affairs, the British recognized Nigeria in 1960 as an independent state. Predictably, the whole country was plunged almost immediately into what I have called post-imperial malaise.

The malaise has not let up. For thirty-three of the years since independence, Nigerians were subjugated by military dictatorships. Despite living in the richest country in Africa, with a GDP of over $500 billion, between 50 and 60 percent of its 185 million inhabitants live in "extreme poverty," and about seven in ten fall below the poverty line.[5] The country's civil liberties record is shocking. Its police brutality is among the world's worst.[6] Human trafficking, the modern version of the slave trade, run by gangs tolerated by the security force, is virtually a national industry. As the US Department of State reported, "Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for women and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking."[7] The drug trade is at least tolerated by the police and engaged in by senior members of the government. Regime after regime has compiled a monumental record of corruption. Between independence and 2000, approximately $400 billion was stolen by Nigeria's leaders, and the then governor of Nigeria's Central Bank, Lamido Sanusi, informed President Goodluck Jonathan that the state oil company, Nigerian National Petroleum, had failed to remit $20 billion of oil revenues, which it owed the state.[8] Jonathan apparently knew where the money went and simply fired the bank governor. Others also knew where the money went. According to Oby Ezekwesili, the former vice president of the World Bank for Africa, about 80 percent of the oil revenue "ended up in the hands of one per cent of the population."[9] Election after election was a model of fraud, to the point that the very concept of representative government is debased.[10]

Given the turmoil, oppression, and fraud of the twentieth century, which contrasted greatly with the apparently satisfactory and secure way of life within Muslim Nigeria in the nineteenth century, one could hardly expect to find peace and tranquility. It is remarkable that stability had lasted so long. The apparent reason for its longevity was a combination of corruption—almost all those with the power to overthrow the regime had their hands in the treasury—and what American government observers described as a reign of terror, which kept out those who could challenge the insiders.[11] The US State Department in 2012 reported

> abuses committed by the security services with impunity, including killings, beatings, arbitrary detention, and destruction of property; and societal violence, including ethnic, regional, and religious violence. Other serious

> human rights problems included extrajudicial killings by security forces, including summary executions; security force torture, rape, and other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment of prisoners, detainees, and criminal suspects; harsh and life-threatening prison and detention center conditions; arbitrary arrest and detention; prolonged pretrial detention; denial of fair public trial; executive influence on the judiciary. . . . Police and security forces generally operated with impunity. . . . Authorities generally did not hold police accountable for the use of excessive or deadly force or for the deaths of persons in custody.[12]

Coherent analysis or even satisfactory reportage on northern Nigeria in this period is hard to find.[13] But it appears that the people of the Muslim core of northern Nigeria, the residue of the five-century-long Bornu (also spelled "Borno") empire, attempted to re-create for themselves something like the society that al-Kamanii formed in the early years of the nineteenth century.

Initially, the movement was peaceful. Like the members of the little discussion groups that emerged in Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, Bukhara, and Malaysia, Nigerian theological students eschewed political action. Beginning around 1995—police reports differ on the date—they secluded themselves in a mosque and occupied themselves with studying religious texts.[14] Soon, however, they began to read the proclamations of the Muslim Brotherhood and to think of themselves as its Nigerian affiliate. They called themselves, in Nigeria's Hawza language, the Yan Brothers. It was this group that a young Nigerian Muslim by the name of Muhammad Yusuf joined around 2000. He eventually led a faction of the original group in 2002 to form the Union of the People of God's Way to Summon and Struggle, known today as Boko Haram.[15]

It was probably the group's behavior, meeting together in seclusion and "conspiring," more than its assertion of dissidence (about which they may not have known much), that drew attention and eventually routine attacks from the police. There is no indication that the religious students were engaged in illegal or violent action, but as the freelance journalist Andrew Walker reported in a paper for the United States Institute of Peace,

> Observers say the group constructed a "state within a state," with a cabinet, its own religious police, and a large farm. It attracted more and more people under its roof by offering welfare handouts, food, and shelter. Many of the people the group attracted were refugees from the wars over the border in Chad and jobless Nigerian youths. The source of the group's money at this stage of its existence is not clear. Members of the Borno religious establishment say that Yusuf received funds from Salafist contacts in Saudi Arabia following two hajj trips that Yusuf made during this time. Another possible source of funding during this period was donations from wealthy northern Nigerians.[16]

The police apparently were ordered to close down the establishment. In December 2003, they attacked and killed some of the students and wounded others. Bystanders reported that they had seen the police "ordering members of this group, including their wounded cripples, to lie face down on their stomachs and then two or three shots were fired into them."[17]

During this confrontation, Yusuf was said to have been receiving medical treatment in Saudi Arabia. On his return he found his little group shocked and terrified; he responded by setting up a stronghold in the city of Borno to protect them. From that base he traveled all over northern Nigeria lecturing on the evils of the government and the dangers of its program of Westernization. Yusuf was not an educated man and certainly not a qualified *mujtahid* (religious authority), but he caught the mood of the people of Bornu. Profoundly disillusioned by the government's corruption, particularly as manifested by the governor of Bornu state, a trickle of similarly motivated and angry young men began to join him. With few economic prospects, feeling alienated by the state and often beaten, and seeing relatives murdered by the security forces, they rallied around him.

It is not clear how much of the sentiment he tapped into was due to anger against the government, and how much was religious. In Muslim thought, as I noted earlier, all religious issues are regarded as political and all political issues come back to religious principles. The people who began to follow Yusuf probably did not draw a distinction, but others did. Some of Yusuf's group thought that the emphasis on religion was misplaced and that political oppression and social inequality were more significant. But outside of religion, there was no way such issues could be discussed. A 1984 Nigerian law had made it a criminal offense to publish any material considered embarrassing or against the interests of the government. The political police, known as the Special Joint Task Forces (JTF), was given a free hand to squelch any hint of dissent.

So brutal was the JTF that it made recruiting easy for the rebels. In a particularly well-known incident in January 2009 the JTF provoked a confrontation in which they killed several members of Boko Haram and forbade medical treatment to the wounded so that they bled to death.[18] Yusuf responded with "An Open Letter to the Federal Government," in which he threatened that unless the secret police attacks stopped within forty days, "jihadi operations will begin in the country which only Allah will be able to stop."[19] The government apparently scoffed at the idea that a small group of religious fanatics could challenge it and did not respond.

Yusuf had not initially called for violence, but he seems to have been trapped by his own rhetoric. He either ordered or condoned a

series of attacks on police posts in neighboring towns. The government answered in July 2009 with an all-out assault on the mosque and headquarters of Yusuf's group. The police stormed the mosque and executed all the people inside. During a five-day period, the police are believed to have killed about seven hundred or eight hundred people; several thousands fled or were driven from their homes.[20] Yusuf apparently managed to escape but was tracked down and apprehended.

The police later reported that Yusuf was shot while trying to escape, but he was filmed, standing still and in handcuffs, as he was being shot. As the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point found, "There is no doubt that the suppression operation of 2009, and the killing of Muhammad Yusuf by Nigerian security forces in July of that year, was a turning point for Boko Haram."[21] The movement promised revenge. Soon after, it announced that it was forming a link with al-Qaida.

No new leader gained control of the movement for nine months. The Nigerian government seems to have made no effort during that time to work out a program to avoid the terrible events that were to follow. Small-scale attacks by militants were met by more arrests and almost inevitable killings.

It was apparently the arrests and killings that moved the fighting to the next stage: the new leader of the movement, Abu Bakr Sheku, became determined to rescue his followers from prison. Remarkably, on September 7, 2010, he managed to break out almost a thousand militants from the hands of the JTF. The JTF had already killed over 950 captives in the first six months of 2013, and there is little doubt the captured militants would have been executed as well. As a senior officer in the Nigerian Army told Amnesty International, "Hundreds have been killed in detention either by shooting them or by suffocation. . . . There are times when people are brought out on a daily basis and killed. About five people on average are killed nearly on a daily basis." Others "suffered serious injuries due to severe beating and eventually died in detention due to lack of medical attention. . . . Others were reportedly shot in the leg during interrogation, provided no medical care and left to bleed to death."[22]

These ghastly events have not stopped. In May 2016, Amnesty International found that at least 149 detainees, including young children and babies, had died or been killed in just one military barracks in the first four months of that year. The conditions for the 1,200 prisoners still held there were described as "appalling . . . harrowing and horrifying . . . and at least 120 of those detained are children."[23]

These activities by the government may not justify the terror

campaign by Boko Haram, but they certainly go some way toward explaining it. With the government model in front of them, with ingrained practices of tribal warfare, and undoubtedly spurred by vengeance, Boko Haram has carried out a program of terror. Both litanies of crimes against humanity—those of Boko Haram and those of the Nigerian government—have been examined as carefully as possible under very difficult conditions by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.[24]

With their numbers augmented by the men and women they liberated from prison, Boko Haram began a full-scale terrorist attack on the government. It destroyed 76 police stations, 14 prison buildings, and 1,205 administrative buildings, as well as churches and a UN facility.[25] (It regarded the UN as an ally of the government.) Attack and retaliation followed each other relentlessly.[26] The Nigerian government maintains that Boko Haram has killed twelve thousand people and crippled eight thousand. As fighting spread, the original issues tended to blur. Violence itself became an objective.[27] Massacres of apparently unrelated communities followed. The more ghastly the event, the more Boko Haram publicized it.

The best-known event, apparently designed to shock the movement's adversaries and gain worldwide attention, was the abduction in April 2014 of 276 schoolgirls.[28] The group's leader, Sheku, did not reveal his motive in the kidnapping, but four factors may have contributed to his decision. The first was publicity.[29] Like all insurgencies, Boko Haram seeks to publicize its cause. That was the reason the Algerian insurgents, to take one example, precipitated the Battle of Algiers. Insurgents know that unless they can get worldwide attention, they can be quietly liquidated. Some, as I shall discuss when I deal with the Islamic State, also believe they can dishearten their opponents or force them into actions that dissipate their resources.

The second reason was to acquire young women who could be turned into suicide bombers. The third was to raise a new generation within the cause. It is believed that about a third of the kidnapped girls became pregnant whether by rape or consent—they obviously had little choice. The fourth reason was inherent in the movement's slogan: that Westernization, which is usually acquired through education and was taken to be a major government objective, had to be stamped out. Attacks on schools were always a key element in the campaign after the murder of Yusuf. Under Sheku, Boko Haram destroyed 512 primary schools and 38 secondary schools. In addition, terrorists slaughtered fifty-nine Muslim schoolboys who were apparently studying Western agricultural techniques.

As announced in their name, the zealots believed that *boko,* which in the Bornu dialect means "Westernization" or "the fake way," is

religiously illegal (*haram*), according to the *Shariah*.[30] The Jamat Ahl al-Sunah, as they call themselves, had already achieved some of their objective before they began their violent action. What they were demanding, the implementation of the Shariah, was already the law in the whole northern zone, although not fully implemented. So their program was not, on its face, revolutionary. What was revolutionary was their demand that it be implemented.

Implementation of Islam, as we have seen in all the movements I have discussed, was not just a matter of faith; it encompassed political, social, educational, and economic policy. By the criteria set out in the Shariah, the Nigerian government was un-Islamic and therefore haram.[31] To most Muslims of northern Nigeria, the fact that the government was oppressive and corrupt was likely not separable from its being un-Islamic. The way their hostility could be explained, justified, and mobilized was, in the Nigerian idiom, the proclamation of Islam. That is what Yusuf tried to do.

How can we envisage what his followers saw? We have no public opinion polls, but we can at least look at the record from a reasonably objective perspective. All reports by journalists, US government officers, members of human rights organizations, and UN officials highlight the population's grievances. Poverty, government and security force corruption, and police impunity and brutality created a fertile ground for recruiting Boko Haram members. Boko Haram's violence, in turn, terrified a population that was caught in between the two forces and tragically mauled by both.

But it is sobering to learn that Boko Haram itself soon came to be seen by some of its adherents as too cautious or too mild. From the original group, a shadowy and perhaps even more violent group known as Ansarul Muslimina Fi Biladis Sudan split off around 2011.[32] The increasing perception of violent groups as not violent enough is a persistent result of efforts to suppress insurgency by violent means. As the older generation is killed or marginalized, new leaders and new groups come to the fore. To prove themselves, the new leaders must outdo the leaders they are replacing. So there seems to be an almost inevitable push toward violence when such groups come under attack. This is one reason special forces, drones, and other forms of counterinsurgency have proved ineffective against Muslim insurgents: they create the opening—and in some minds the need—for an escalated response.[33]

A large-scale multinational attack on Boko Haram began in January 2015 when military forces were deployed from Nigeria, Chad, Cameroon, and Niger. Better armed than the Nigerian police and able to rely on air power, they also brought in aid from the outside, including South African mercenaries, Israeli counterinsurgency

specialists, and American Special Forces.[34] American drones have also been used, at least for intelligence purposes. Whether they have been used for bombing is so far not known.

The defeat of the movement and the death of its leader have been repeatedly proclaimed, but in 2015 the movement appeared secure enough to send some of its forces to fight in Libya. On March 7 of that year, Sheku pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi of the Islamic State.

The story of Nigeria contains the whole course of development from a stable, long-lasting, independent African state through imperial conquest and colonial rule to post-imperial dictatorship to social violence. It cannot be told, at this point, how much further the nation —or group of nations—has to fall. We can say only that the peaceful stability that began the nineteenth century now seems very far away.

CHAPTER 41

Usama bin Ladin and al-Qaida

Among the millions who pondered the writings of Sayyid Qutb was a young student at the University of Jiddah, Usama bin Ladin. He would embody and implement much of what Qutb preached, but why he chose the path he took remains somewhat obscure. This is not surprising because all public figures who stake out leadership roles take on a persona rather as actors do. The main difference is that actors put a character aside when they stop playing the role, whereas public figures are often trapped by the character they have projected and feel compelled to continue "playing." It is often difficult to penetrate the theatrical mask and see the real person behind it. If the person is under stress and purposefully working at projecting an image, as Usama did, it is even more difficult to see him. I will begin trying to understand Usama where he began, with the family into which he was born.

Usama bin Ladin's father, Muhammad, was the Arab version of Horatio Alger. Born in poverty in a remote village in the far south of Arabia, the Hadhramaut, in what is today Yemen, Muhammad never learned to read or write.[1] When he was about ten years old, just before the First World War, he made his way to the relatively bustling town of Jiddah. Taken in by a fellow Yemeni, he got a job as a porter, carrying heavy loads on his back. From that lowly trade, he moved a step up into bricklaying. As one job followed another, he learned each new trade and acquired a reputation for reliable work at reasonable prices. Prices had to be low because Arabia was then a poor country, but labor was cheap and he was a shrewd businessman. As he gathered both clients and workers, he founded his own construction company. That was in 1930, just three years before Saudi Arabia gave out the concession that would lead to a deluge of oil wealth.

During the 1930s, Muhammad led a frugal life in everything but marriage (he had some twenty-two wives over his life) and children (he fathered seventy-seven); he saved as much as he could and

expanded his workforce as he moved from one project to the next. Along the way, he won the respect of the Saudi royal family. After the death of the state's founder, Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud, in 1953, Muhammad's efforts enabled him to take advantage of a great opportunity. Abd al-Aziz's oldest son, Saud, who in his youth had been the strong arm of his father, proved to be an incompetent king. He allowed his ambitions and the avarice of his court to outrun his resources. His government, which, like the government of King Henry VIII, amounted to little more than his household, ran out of money. He could not pay the upkeep—or meet the growing expectations—of his entourage as a great lord was expected to do in Arab society.[2] He became desperate. Probably, like monarchs throughout European history, he would have raided the wealth of his subjects, but Muhammad came to his rescue by lending the king the money he needed to survive.

Lending the king a life jacket—or, in the Arabian context, a waterskin—proved to be the shrewdest move of Muhammad's life. King Saud was in his debt and paid him back the only way he could: with contracts for government projects as the flow of oil money (and American loans) throughout the 1950s began to make them possible. But Saud had only a weak hold on reality. When he kept spending beyond his means, his brothers grew alarmed. Finally, they decided that he must step aside and allow a more competent family member to become king.

Getting a king to abdicate is difficult. History is full of accounts of murder of the incumbent, the aspirant, or the adviser; often the clash of their interests led to ruinous civil wars. Muhammad bin Ladin, taking on the dangerous role of counselor, persuaded King Saud to step aside peacefully and go into exile so that his far more able brother Faisal could become king. Faisal rewarded Muhammad by giving him a virtual monopoly of government construction projects. Money flowed in. Thus Muhammad was able to pass to his seventeenth son, Usama, the millions of dollars that would finance his activities all over the Muslim world.

Young Usama grew up in an environment in Jiddah that his father, as a child in the Hadhramaut, could not have dreamed of. How much influence his father exerted cannot be judged because Usama was only ten when Muhammad died in a plane crash in 1967. But under Muhammad's guidance, the family was regarded as socially and religiously conservative. Those who knew Usama during his youth later remembered his early commitment to religion.

This youthful devoutness should provide a useful explanation for his later life, but are the memories true? When we reflect on the lives of others we are often tempted to find one thread among many and

call it the origin of a pattern. Accounts of the lives of saints and criminals abound with stories of unusual childhoods that are often partly accurate, partly misremembered, and partly mythmaking, by the subject or others. Such memories are a part of the problem of separating the person from the persona. We know what Usama became, but those who have studied his life differ on how he grew into that person. Some writers simply invented a personality. A few have portrayed him as a wild young man who gave himself over to sex and liquor. Others give us a boy who did little but read the Quran. A few describe him as a "normal" young boy with a passion for sports. What we do know suggests an evolution rather different from all of these explanations. I speculate that in his early years he was subjected to powerful influences that may help us understand his later involvement in militant Islam.

Usama's mother was a Syrian from Latakia, and it is generally believed that her family were not Sunni Muslims but rather members of the Alawi sect.[3] The Alawis are regarded by strict Muslims as heretics. Probably, although this is not certain, Muhammad bin Ladin did not marry her but took her as a mistress.[4] That was a somewhat unusual practice among Sunni families but was common among less strict Muslims and Christians. What we know is that after she gave birth to Usama, Muhammad arranged for her to marry a Hadhramauti clerk working in his firm. Muhammad recognized Usama as his son, but the boy grew up in his stepfather's house. Then, when he was about seventeen, his mother arranged a marriage for him to a young girl who appears to have also been of Alawi origin.

This can only be speculation, but it seems sensible to view young Usama as having had to deal with the effects of complex family relationships, diverse or even hostile religious influences, and great wealth. I suspect that these are what moved him to seek the certainty of Islam. At some point in his youth, he began to read the Quran, discuss religion with his companions, and, like millions of other Muslims, read the writings of Qutb. When he entered university at about seventeen, he began to study with Qutb's brother Muhammad, who had left Egypt, where he had spent time in prison, and was dedicating himself to perpetuating his brother's beliefs.[5]

The combination of his personal dedication to Islam and the teaching of the Qutb brothers created a framework into which Usama fit the flood of media accounts of the 1979 Soviet attack on Muslim Afghanistan. That attack on a Muslim society by a society that proclaimed itself atheistic apparently electrified him. At twenty-two years of age, he left Saudi Arabia to join hundreds of men from around the Muslim world to become a jihadi.[6] He could not have known much about Afghanistan.

Among his companions at that time was a remarkable Palestinian, Abdullah Yusuf Azzam, who was sixteen years older than Usama.[7] If we are in doubt about some influences on Usama's life, the influences on Azzam are crystal clear. He carried deep and bitter memories of the Israeli expulsion of his people from their homeland, and he saw what was happening to the Afghans, like what happened to the Palestinians, as part of the invading tide of imperialism. As a young man, he joined the Palestinian/Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, studied in an agricultural institute and taught in a public school, and then went to the University of Damascus to study Islamic law. After graduating he began to perform the duties of a Muslim cleric in his native village, but after the 1967 Israeli occupation of the Palestinian West Bank he fled across the Jordan River. Like many Palestinians, he looked back with anger at Israelis, and like some, he participated in guerrilla raids on Israeli targets.

He soon concluded that while Israel posed the immediate threat to his way of life, Israel was just one aspect of the problem. Like many Arabs, he had come to believe that Arab nationalism could therefore be only a part of the solution. Increasingly, he saw the challenge of imperialism to be universal in the Muslim world, and he thought the only workable defense had to be grounded in Islam. It was to equip himself to take part in that campaign that he next went to study at the Islamic Azhar University in Cairo. We do not know his extracurricular activities, but he apparently made contact with the growing body of Egyptian Muslim radicals. Then, armed with a doctorate in Islamic law, he returned to Jordan, where he preached and taught a radical or —to use the Israeli term—"muscular" version of Islam. His interpretation was far from the policy of the Jordanian government, which had accommodated to Israeli power. In anger, he departed for Saudi Arabia to teach at the University of Jiddah, where he overlapped with Usama bin Ladin in the same department for at least two years.

In 1979, about five hundred Muslims, led by Juhaiman bin Muhammad, a Najdi bedouin of the Ubaida tribe, seized the Great Mosque in Mecca in a stunning demonstration against the ruling dynasty. They charged that the Saudis had lost the spirit of Islam and had given themselves up to worldly corruption. The attack was an echo of the rebellion in 1927 of tribesmen who embodied the original thrust of Wahhabism and remained strict fundamentalists. King Abd al-Aziz ibn Saud suppressed them by 1930 and killed their leaders, but he shrewdly formed the tribesmen into the National Guard, which he used to balance against the army. Thus he ensured his regime against coups d'état. He also provided a grand encampment to settle them and established a corps of religious police to try to cater to their

fundamentalism. These measures successfully met the main criticism of the tribesmen until the flood of oil money enabled the elite and particularly the children and relatives of the king to engage in a flamboyant lifestyle. It was this violation of the Wahhabi conservative doctrine that triggered the uprising in 1979. It was suppressed and most of the insurgents were killed. Juhaiman bin Muhammad was beheaded.

There is no indication that Azzam was involved or even knew about their plans, but, being identified as a radical, he was removed from his professorship. Unwelcome in Jordan and Egypt and unable to stay in Saudi Arabia, he moved to Pakistan. There he quickly came into contact with the young men from all over the Muslim world who had come to fight the Russians. To Azzam, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was simply another event in the war he had experienced in Palestine: imperialism everywhere was the fundamental challenge.

This challenge had not been met by nationalism, so, as a certified doctor of Islam from the great university-mosque of al-Azhar, Azzam issued a call to action, a religious ruling or fatwa, that required all believers to take up arms. Basing his reasoning on a decision by the thirteenth-century Muslim fundamentalist Ahmad ibn Taimiyah, who proclaimed that immediately after the declaration of belief, the next obligation of a true believer is to repel enemy aggressors, Azzam ruled that jihad is the way to do so. He quotes from the Quran, "If you don't sally forth [to defend the community] He [God] will afflict you with a severe punishment and will replace you with a different people."[8] Indeed, one of the clearest messages in the Quran is what happened to one society after another that failed in this religious duty: each was destroyed. Azzam proclaimed that the absolute obligation of all believers, men, women, and children, rich and poor, was to defend the Islamic community from attack by disbelievers, and

> if the Muslims of this land cannot expel the *Kuffar* because of lack of forces, because they slacken, are indolent or simply do not act, then the absolute obligation [to drive out the invader] spreads in the shape of a circle from the nearest to the next nearest. If they too slacken or there is again a shortage of manpower, then it is upon the people behind them, and on the people behind them, to march forward. This process continues until it becomes an absolute obligation upon the whole world.[9]

This was the message Azzam gave Usama when he arrived in Pakistan. Usama found Azzam in Peshawar running an operations base, in Arabic a *qaida,* to keep track of mujahidin and help their families. It was known as the Maktab al-Khadamat, the "Office of Services." That organization was the origin of the al-Qaida movement, of which Azzam is regarded as the father.[10]

Although his principal task was logistical and should have kept him

out of harm's way, Usama was swept up in the excitement of the campaign against the Russians. Most of the guerrillas were Afghans, but the foreign mujahidin played a significant role in pushing the Russians out. In 1986 and 1987, he was twice wounded in battle and was said also to have been affected by Russian chemical weapons.[11] More important than his personal combat, he helped financially to facilitate the arrival of thousands of jihadis from all over the Muslim world.

Whether or not he was fully aware of it, Usama was then a de facto ally of the United States, which was pouring money and arms into the coffers of the insurgents through its ally Pakistan.[12] Over the entire war, US cash assistance alone reached about $3 billion. Usama must have known about this aid, both because the American government publicized it and because his own foreign recruits profited from it. He did not take any of this money himself, but he certainly did not urge the mujahidin to reject it. He also began to use his own funds both to publicize the cause and to support the volunteers who passed through Pakistan on their way into Afghanistan.

No one knows exactly how many followed that trail, but British and American intelligence services estimated that they numbered at least ten thousand and perhaps as many as twenty thousand. They came from all over the Muslim world—Chechens, Uyghurs, Tajiks, and various Turkish peoples of Central Asia; Filipinos, Malays, and Acehis, from Southeast Asia; Kashmiris, Pakistanis, and Indian Muslims from South Asia; Libyans, Algerians, Tunisians, and Moroccans from North Africa; Bosnians and Muslim immigrants from Germany, France, England, and Spain; even some from North and South America. All these were in addition to those from the Middle Eastern countries. No such gathering had taken place since the International Brigade assembled to fight the armies of Francisco Franco, Benito Mussolini, and Adolf Hitler in the 1936–1939 Spanish Civil War.

When the Russians withdrew, in February 1989, Usama was thirty-two years old. No longer dependent on Azzam's guidance—Azzam was assassinated by persons unknown in November of that year—Usama was already recognized as an experienced warrior and proven administrator.[13] Afghanistan had taught him that money could facilitate the gathering, arming, and deployment of dedicated Muslims who could defeat and drive away even powerful armies from the global North. This was literally a revolutionary finding: as we have seen, none of the great nineteenth- and twentieth-century guerrilla leaders had accomplished that task. One after another they had failed to expel the invaders. Only Atatürk had succeeded, and he drove out only the Greeks. The Afghans, of course, had given the British a bloody series of defeats, but the campaign against the Russians was in

a class by itself. The Russians had committed the best units of an army that prided itself on having defeated the mighty Wehrmacht and was equipped to European standards with armor and aircraft. Half a million Soviet soldiers served in Afghanistan during the ten years of the war and lost.[14] Their defeat proved that the South had acquired two powerful new tactics—guerrilla warfare when that was possible, and, when assembling combatants was not possible, terrorism. Using one or both, even a poor, divided, and primitive people could defeat the mighty powers.[15] Usama and his fellow mujahidin emerged triumphant from Afghanistan.

Usama had barely reestablished himself in Saudi Arabia when events began to lead to Saddam Husain's August 1990 invasion of Kuwait. To Usama this was a horrifying prospect. Saddam was a secular ruler who at that stage was determinedly and publicly opposed to Islam; that alone would have made Usama oppose him. But there was more. The antagonism between Saddam and the ruler of Kuwait raised again the persistent theme of disunity in Arab international relations. Usama had experienced a near collapse of the Afghan resistance as groups squabbled with one another even during battles with the Russians. So painful was this to Usama that he had once, in the midst of the war, given up and gone home. Only when he saw signs of unity did he return to the fray. Now he was seeing similar acrimony among his own people. He decided that Saddam, the "rot" of secularism, and Arab disunity must be stopped.

Then, as the forces of the global South were getting ready to tear themselves apart over Kuwait, thus giving the North an excuse to intervene, another element came into play. One of the jokes of the time had it that the Americans would not have cared about Arab affairs if Kuwait and Iraq produced bananas. But they produced oil, which fueled the industries and transportation networks of the North and financed both its governments and its power elite. American strategists called the "flow of oil on acceptable terms" a "vital national interest." In 1962, the United States National Policy Paper had placed this at the top of the nation's foreign policy objectives.[16] Twenty-eight years later the prospect that any Middle Eastern ruler, especially an often hostile and erratic dictator like Saddam, could acquire a headlock on the combined petroleum resources of Iraq and Kuwait was unacceptable to America, as this would allow the Iraqi government to dictate the price of oil and control its flow. The Europeans and the Japanese, while not so adamant, agreed.[17] All the Northern powers were determined to keep Kuwait independent when Saddam invaded it on August 2, 1990.

Fearing that the seizure of Kuwait was the first step in a march toward Saudi Arabia's oil fields, the United States rushed in elements

of an airborne division and applied diplomatic and economic pressure on Saddam's government. As the weeks passed, America built up its own forces and cobbled together an astonishing coalition to oppose Saddam. Attempts to dislodge Saddam did not work. The "allies" marched to different drummers. Some saw the conflict in terms of oil policy;[18] others were driven by ideology or fear of Saddam's regime. The administration of George Bush Sr. gradually came to believe that no diplomatic solution was possible and that it must intervene militarily. This was the origin of Desert Storm on January 16, 1991.

Usama viewed the arrival of American troops in Saudi Arabia through the lens of his Afghan experience. They were foreign non-Muslims, even anti-Muslims, entering what Muslims and particularly Arabs had always considered their preserve, the heartland of the Muslim world, what they called the Dar al-Salam. Arabia was the location of the "two shrines," Mecca and Madinah, Islam's sanctuary. Never since the time of Muhammad had non-Muslim troops been quartered on this land. Even non-Muslim merchants, travelers, and scholars were historically kept out.

Thus, when the Saudi government invited American troops to position themselves in Arabia in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, Usama lashed out. Rising to protect what he considered his people's "vital religious interest," he criticized his government's willingness to turn its national duty over to the Americans. And, based on his proven success in mobilizing fighters against the Russians, he offered to create a force of one hundred thousand mujahidin—which of course was many times the number he and others had assembled in Afghanistan—to drive the Iraqis out. The Americans, he said, were not necessary.

Usama's offer was rebuffed as "impractical" by the Saudi intelligence chief; other officials simply ignored it.[19] The Saudi regime may have seen it as potentially threatening. It realized that it was vulnerable to criticism both for its lavish lifestyle and for its relationship with the Americans. Once assembled, how could such a force be kept from turning on the government? But, many Saudis and Americans believed, Saddam might not stop in Kuwait. He might use Kuwait as a base from which to move down the Gulf into the oil fields and refineries of Aramco. Thus, the government welcomed the Americans and other troops, whose number eventually reached about half a million men and women, nearly all non-Muslims. While efforts were made to keep them out of sight, their presence could not be wholly hidden. Usama was not alone in thinking of them as invaders.

Usama had begun to see his childhood companions, the Saudi princes, as corrupters of Islam. They and the new upper class were discreet in public but were widely known to pursue a lavish lifestyle

that comprehensively violated Wahhabi standards. The Wahhabi religious establishment, the *ulamah,* shared his worries but were loath to criticize the regime. From the beginning, they had always been a part of the ruling regime. And, in recent years, they had become increasingly beholden to the government for both their income and their authority.[20]

Meanwhile, the Saudi government had come to see that it had to deal with diverse factions in Islam. The old partnership of *din wa dunya*—the Saudi ruling family and the Wahhabi ulamah—remained, but, as the 1979 Juhaiman revolt had shown, some religious zealots wanted to overthrow the monarchy and were not restrained by the religious establishment. To the government ministers, what Usama was saying contained a threat to national security. While they could not oppose part of his message, since it was essentially the same as Wahhabism, they did not want him to deliver the part that deprecated the monarchy. Usama was too well connected to be arrested, but several officials asked him to tone down his rhetoric. In response, he decided to leave his homeland.

Stung by his public criticism, the Saudi government refused him permission to leave, but he got a temporary waiver through family connections and slipped out of the country. He had planned to return to Afghanistan but found that the struggle against the Soviet Union had left the country shattered. Each faction fought against the others, and most of the former national liberation leaders had become warlords. Every group was engaged in a vicious war of all against all for the meager fruits of victory. Usama, revolted by what he saw, looked for another haven. The choices were few. Sudan seemed the most promising.

What made Sudan attractive was that at the same time that the Russians were forced out of Afghanistan, the Sudanese military had overthrown the civil government of Sadiq al-Mahdi and proclaimed that it was installing a Muslim fundamentalist government.[21] Such a regime, Usama thought, would provide the base of operations he needed; he rushed to establish himself there. In his enthusiasm, he encouraged those of “his” mujahidin who had not gone home to come to the Sudan and bring their families. Apparently, this influx alarmed the new government, which, having just overthrown the previous government, was leery of potential rivals and particularly of battle-trained guerrillas. As Usama set up training camps for men whom Western intelligence agencies considered likely to become future mujahidin in the Balkans, Chechnya, Kashmir, and the Philippines, the Sudanese looked on apprehensively. To them, these men were Usama’s private army.

Presumably Usama heard of their concern. In any event, he sought

to win the regime's approval by launching a large-scale investment program. Like his father, he was fascinated by construction. Over the next few years, he is said to have put about $200 million into projects in Sudan. Some of these were beneficial, but few were profitable. The Sudanese had great needs but little cash. When he decided to leave after five years, they could neither repay the loans he had given nor continue most of the projects he had built.[22]

More than just a financial disappointment, Sudan was becoming dangerous. As Usama engaged in ever more notorious paramilitary and terrorist operations abroad, the Sudanese themselves came under severe criticism. When it emerged that the key man in the February 26, 1993, bombing of the New York World Trade Center, Rami Yusuf al-Balochi (aka Abdul Basit Mahmud Abd al-Karim), a Pakistani from Balochistan, had been trained in an al-Qaida camp, the United States, Israel, and Egypt all pressured the Sudanese government to close down Usama's operation. The Sudanese, taking this advice to heart, apparently allowed unidentified hit men to try to kill him.

Had Usama kept quiet about his plans, he might have been safe in Sudan. But publicity was a key part of the new version of terrorism. Not only did the enemy have to be struck, but everyone must be told that he had been struck and warned that they or others would be struck in the future if they did not conform. Usama had to advertise his actions. He admitted, or, in the current phrase, "claimed responsibility," for frequent and painful attacks.

These attacks made new enemies in new places. One was on American soldiers in Muslim Yemen and another on American soldiers in Muslim Somalia. Usama boasted that it was his mujahidin who forced the American withdrawal from Mogadishu in 1993—an event made familiar in the film *Black Hawk Down* and so providing a valuable propaganda niche. Al-Qaida—that is, Usama's agents or associates—was also presumed to have tried to assassinate Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak during his visit to Ethiopia in June 1995 and was charged with bombing a US facility in Riyadh the following November. Whether or not al-Qaida was involved (there are some doubts), it had done and said enough to be judged guilty. The previously welcoming Sudanese leaders, even if they were dedicated Muslim fundamentalists, decided it was time for Usama to move on.

But where could he go? He had crossed the political redline in Saudi Arabia, which had decided to jail him if he returned. The government revoked his citizenship in 1994. Most other Muslim countries, he judged rightly, either would refuse him entry or, if they got hold of him, would "disappear" him or hand him over to Saudi Arabia. And he had to assume that the outstanding American offer of a

reward on a royal scale for his capture would attract bounty hunters. Many hands were painting the map red. Almost the only place left was Afghanistan. With his usual opulent style, Usama flew there by private jet in May 1996. There could be no turning back.

The Russians had long since left Afghanistan, and the Taliban was on the march. Staffed by religious students (*taliban*), it proclaimed itself a fundamentalist Sunni theocracy. It was thus a potential safe haven for the Sunni fundamentalist Usama claimed to be. Moreover, he would likely be welcomed there as one of the volunteers who had fought and been wounded helping the Afghans recover their independence. They had few friends and little money. He could not help much with the friends, but he still had a great deal of hard currency. And he had acquired a strong-minded, determined ally on whom he could rely. After the assassination in November 1989 of his first mentor and the founder of al-Qaida, the Jordanian Abdullah Azzam, Usama had formed a close association with an Egyptian named Ayman al-Zawahiri.

Zawahiri was an eye surgeon who had become a supporter of radical Islam. Not as wealthy as Usama, he was born in 1951 into a family of well-to-do doctors and university professors. He had joined the Muslim Brotherhood as a fourteen-year-old student in 1965, the year Sayyid Qutb was arrested and imprisoned. Realizing the danger of his ideas, which were inspired by Qutb and by his membership in the Brotherhood, Zawahiri kept them secret while he continued his studies. Upon graduation, he served three years in the Egyptian army and then established a clinic in the Cairo exurban town of Maadi.[23] He had not been secret enough about his opinions. When President Anwar Sadat was assassinated in October 1981, he was arrested, imprisoned, and tortured. Allegedly he broke under torture and implicated a member of his group. An Egyptian lawyer who was imprisoned with him said that Zawahiri's shame over his weakness transformed him from a relative moderate into an extremist. Whether or not this was the cause, he emerged from prison determined to destroy the Egyptian dictatorship.[24]

Released after three years in prison, Zawahiri went on pilgrimage to Mecca. He spent the year of 1985–1986 in Arabia and met Usama there. Having become a far more violent man than Azzam, who favored a policy of evolution and education, Zawahiri encouraged Usama to adopt terrorism.

He not only encouraged it but also set the style. After moving to Pakistan, Zawahiri allegedly organized revenge against the Egyptian government through a 1995 attack on its embassy in Islamabad. The attack apparently alarmed Usama; indeed, he is said to have come close to breaking with Zawahiri over it. There is no sign that Usama

opposed violent action as such, but he feared that terrorism inside Pakistan might cause the Pakistani government to prevent movement of mujahidin into Afghanistan, and, having just fled Sudan, he may have been worried the Pakistanis might turn him over to the Saudis.

Perhaps reined in by Usama, Zawahiri was relatively subdued for several years. He spent much of his time working under the auspices of the Red Crescent in Peshawar, treating mujahidin who had been wounded fighting the Russians in Afghanistan, and even went on trips. He performed a sort of diplomatic mission in Chechnya (where he was arrested and briefly jailed by the Russian police) and even went to America, touring California to raise funds for the mujahidin.

After these interludes, he returned to his more violent activities. He was alleged to have been involved in the June 26, 1996, bombing of a US Air Force housing complex in Riyadh known as the Khobar Towers, and in the vicious 1997 attack on foreign tourists in Luxor that made al-Qaida unpopular in Egypt. Undaunted, he coauthored with Usama in 1998 a fatwa calling for war against the United States and Israel.[25] Then, after the spectacular attack on the USS *Cole* in Aden in October 2000, both he and Usama slipped away to Afghanistan, where the Taliban government gave them Afghan citizenship and allowed them to establish a base of operations.

By this time, the Taliban controlled Kabul and most of Afghanistan. Relatively secure in power, they were even negotiating an oil deal with the American company Unocal. But the Saudis and the US government began to apply pressure on them to arrest Usama and turn him over. Ironically, Usama was saved not by fellow Muslim sentiment but by Afghanistan's pre-Islamic custom, the Pashtunwali, and its pre-Islamic legal system, the Ravaj, two remnants of the Time of Ignorance (*Jahaliyah*) that Qutb had preached against and Usama was trying to destroy.

Custom and the Ravaj commanded that "guests" were sacrosanct. Turning them over to their enemies was the most heinous crime an Afghan individual, tribe, or government could commit. Regardless of what the protected people may have done, they were untouchable during their visit. In response to a request by the Saudi government to hand over Usama and Zawahiri after the World Trade Center attacks of September 2001, two senior (and usually pro-American) Afghans replied, "If [even] an animal sought refuge with us we would have no choice but to protect it. How, then, about a man who has given himself and his wealth in the cause of Allah and in the cause of *jihad* in Afghanistan?"[26] The absolute obligation to protect guests (*melmastia*) would cause the Afghan government to reject the United States' demand for Usama's extradition. There is no indication that any American official dealing with Afghanistan was aware of the

Afghan tradition or the force it exercised on Afghan politics.[27]

If melmastia was not enough to guarantee his position, Usama solidified it by declaring personal allegiance to the Taliban leader, Mullah Muhammad Umar, and by throwing his dwindling force of Mujahidin into the Mullah's service. Inadvertently, the United States helped Usama's campaign when, in retaliation for simultaneous al-Qaida attacks on American embassies in East Africa, it fired seventy-five missiles at Afghan territory. President Bill Clinton's objective was to kill Usama and as many of his mujahidin as possible, but the attack was legally an act of war and infuriated the Afghans. It ironically had the effect of making the Taliban and al-Qaida, or Mullah Muhammad Umar and Usama, de facto allies.

On the same day, August 28, 1998, the American fleet also fired tomahawk missiles at Sudan's main pharmaceutical factory, which it alleged was being used by al-Qaida to manufacture chemical weapons. Only a year old and built by international aid, some of it American, the factory was actually producing aspirin, the antimalaria drug chloroquine, and antibiotics for cattle. The Sudanese were outraged. To the adherents of al-Qaida, the attack was another proof of the global North's aggression. It was too late to mend Usama's relations with Sudan, but it soured American-Sudanese relations. When the Sudanese requested a UN investigation to prove that the plant had nothing to do with chemical weapons, the United States vetoed the request and also refused inspection by a private firm. The diplomatic outcome was unfortunate but the physical result was tragic. The German ambassador to Sudan estimated that the destruction of the plant and the resulting shortage of medicines probably caused "several tens of thousands of deaths."[28]

Neither the attack on the Sudanese plant nor that on the presumed base of operations of al-Qaida in Afghanistan advanced American objectives. Both were violations of the principle the United States had worked so hard to enshrine in law at the Nuremberg trials in 1945–1946. They were viewed by governments as well as by people all over Africa and Asia as indicating the danger posed by American military might.[29] That perception was driven home in July 1999, when President Bill Clinton imposed a ban on US trade with Taliban-controlled Afghanistan and froze Taliban assets in the United States. Clinton also authorized a number of covert operations against al-Qaida, including assassination attempts. The incoming George W. Bush administration continued Clinton's initiatives and also planned to arm anti-Taliban opposition groups.

These actions, whether justified or not, probably helped set in motion the planning that led to the spectacular suicide attacks on the Pentagon and the World Trade Center in New York on September 11,

2001, in which nearly three thousand people were killed and at least $10 billion worth of damage was done. The American public was shocked and infuriated. The Bush administration decided it must act, and demanded the extradition of Usama. Bin Ladin published his version of the events in his November 24, 2002, "Letter to America."[30]

In a "Secret/NODIS [no distribution]/Eyes Only" message, the US government requested that the president of Pakistan or the head of its Inter-Services Intelligence inform the Taliban leaders that "if any person or group connected in any way to Afghanistan conducts a terrorist attack against our country, our forces or those of our friends or allies, our response will be devastating. It is in your interest and in the interest of your survival to hand over all al-Qaida leaders." The government warned that it would hold leaders of the Taliban "personally responsible" for terrorist activities directed against US interests.[31]

The Afghan government of course knew about Usama's long history of violent activities abroad and presumably was aware of his and al-Qaida's role in the September 11 attacks, but it had to find a formula with which it could live politically and religiously. It proposed a face-saving solution: the United States should present proof of Usama's involvement, and, when convinced by the proof, the Afghan government would decide what to do. It specified a deadline. This was obviously only a ploy, but instead of treating it as a bluff and calling it, the American government issued the threat that "every pillar of the Taliban regime will be destroyed."[32] Its refusal to justify its charge, following the earlier missile attack on Afghan territory, made Afghan compliance with the American demand politically almost impossible.[33] Even an extremist government such as that of the Taliban would have been deemed traitorous in Afghanistan. But the Taliban leaders did not try to find any compromise. When the deadline set for the US government to supply proof expired, Afghanistan's chief judge announced that the charge against Usama was voided and that he was free.

The decision-making process that led to the American invasion is still not fully clear, but there is little doubt that the George W. Bush administration welcomed the chance to flex its muscles. The American people were more than willing, and Bush was urged by his advisers to use the opportunity to get rid of al-Qaida. The United States invaded Afghanistan on October 7, 2001, with the enthusiastic support of English prime minister Tony Blair but without UN Security Council authorization.

The invasion set in motion a process that was devastating to Afghanistan and costly to America. As I write this, a decade and a half later, it is still not ended. By 2016, about 2,500 American soldiers had

been killed, several hundred thousand had been wounded or otherwise harmed, and the nation had spent about $3 trillion. The Afghans suffered an unknown number of deaths, perhaps two hundred thousand wounded, and more than a million driven from their homes. In sixteen years of war, nearly half of Afghan children below the age of five died of war-related causes such as malnourishment and disease, and a whole generation of young people have been stunted by malnutrition.

Before the invasion of Afghanistan, America had acquired a great deal of experience with sanctions, which it had long applied to Iraq. The American government applied its policy in Afghanistan in light of the Iraqi precedent. When told back in 1996 that half a million Iraqi children, more than the number killed in the bombing of Hiroshima, had died as a consequence of sanctions in Iraq, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said, "I think this is a very hard choice, but the price—we think the price is worth it."[34] Whatever it said about American policy, this comment and the reception of it were another sign of how far apart the North and the South had grown. Had such a remark been made about the deaths of children in Europe or America, it would have drawn universal condemnation; made about Iraqi children, it drew almost no attention in the American media. Nor would similar comments or similar actions against Afghan children draw condemnation. But such comments and such actions were widely reported and commented on throughout the Muslim world.[35]

The war in Afghanistan widened the breach begun in the Iraqi war between the North and the South. While fighting raged in Afghanistan, al-Qaida carried out attacks in other places. On July 7, 2005, English-born Muslims, acting independently, hit the London Underground (subway) in the first suicide bombing carried out in England. This was the first demonstration of the new tactics developed by one of the most unlikely of the men at the center of al-Qaida, whose nom de guerre was Abu Musab al-Suri.

Al-Suri (the Syrian) was actually not a Syrian but rather a Spanish citizen who had taken part in the last phase of the Afghan fight against the Soviet occupation. He had made himself a leading expert on guerrilla warfare. Unlike many of the activists he trained, he was an intellectual with "knowledge of literature, classical music, history, politics and the sciences, far beyond the standard curriculum of an average jihadi."[36] Reviewing the struggle between North and South, he concluded that while the tactics of the jihad organizations had worked in the early phases of the struggle, the North had created a "New World Order."

In this new order, security services had developed techniques that enabled them to capture or destroy cells, to prevent jihadis from

acquiring safe havens, and to close off their recruitment and fund-raising. Al-Suri argued that since the nature of the battle had changed, new tactics had to be adopted. Reading widely on guerrilla warfare and counterinsurgency and reflecting on his own experiences, he came to what he thought were the main elements of the new order and the tactics appropriate to it. He described these elements in a huge two-volume work designed to be the guide for Islamic insurgency everywhere throughout the Muslim world. It is entitled *The Global Islamic Resistance Call* (*Dawah al-Muqawamah al-Islamiyah al-Alamiyah*) and was published on the Internet in December 2004.[37]

First, as he saw it, was the development of a new sense of identity. Traditionally, people had identified themselves by towns and cities, hence the word *watan* (nationalism defined by territory), but following the Anglo-French-imposed Sykes-Picot Agreement, this traditional touchstone was replaced by states:

> If we go to any Muslim now, and ask him: where are you from? Indeed, he will mention his country; from Egypt . . . from Syria . . . from Tunisia . . . from Saudi Arabia . . . etc. . . . What we now need to establish in the minds of the Mujahidin who are determined to fight, is the true sense of belonging and commitment, which is according to the words of the Almighty: *verily this brotherhood of yours is a single brotherhood and I am your Lord and Cherisher: therefore serve Me (and no other).*[38]

In effect, al-Suri was describing the evolution of nationalism from *watan,* the territorial state, to *qawm,* which implied an ethnic identification and announced the concept of Pan-Arabism. Al-Suri carries this progression of meanings to the next stage by putting aside both nation-states and ethnic nationalism and emphasizing the Islamic concept of a single religious community, the *ummah* or "Muslim nation." To categorize it, he goes back to the word *watan* but applies it not to territory but to religion. Thus, he says, President George W. Bush "has put us all on one map . . . the enemy has globalized our cause by his attack on [all of] us."[39]

Violent action in the Muslim cause is justified as a command from God to put into effect his order, but it is further personalized by al-Suri's view of what the North has done to the peoples of the South. He sets out what amounts to a charge sheet. The first item sets the tone: "In the first Iraqi War more than 300,000 people were killed, and during the blockade, more than one and a half million children died in the course of 13 years. In the last war to topple Saddam, around 10,000 civilians were killed, and tens of thousands are in prison today. God has disclosed America's deeds in those prisons." He goes on to list Palestine, Bosnia, Chechnya, Afghanistan, Indonesia, Central Africa, the Philippines, Thailand, and Kashmir. He does not, of course, offer any explanation of the policy of the North; he assumes that his

readers will ascribe it to imperialism and, quoting proof texts from the Quran, will not need to justify their sentiments.[40]

The question he asks himself is how to succeed when the old forms of resistance have failed. The resisters "adopted the jihadi ideology and conducted organization work on the regional level, through a secret system and hierarchical network." Then he ticks off a summary of the result: "1. Military failure, defeat in the field. 2. Security failure, disbandment of the secret organizations. 3. Agitation failure (*fashl da'wi*), inability to mobilize the Islamic Nation. 4. Educational failure due to the secrecy. 5. Political failure by not achieving the goal. Result: Complete failure on all levels." [41] Al-Suri goes on to describe failures of guerrilla confrontation from permanent bases in Afghanistan, Bosnia, and Chechnya and the political failure of cell-organized terrorism. These considerations led al-Suri to his new strategy. While it is

> a duty for a Mujahid in Tunisia, or Morocco or Indonesia . . . to rush to his [Iraqi] brothers' aid . . . few are probably able to do that, and it will become harder with time, because the apostate regimes in the areas of confrontation cooperate with America against the Mujahidun. But any Muslim, who wants to participate in jihad and the Resistance, can participate in this battle against America in his country, or anywhere.[42]

His program announced the concept that the war against the North of the world has no boundaries. It has risen above geography, ethnicity, and political identification. It is today a manifestation of religion. And, evidently, his strategy has been at least partly carried out. As the US Congressional Research Service reports, "Cells and associates [of al-Qaida] have been located in over 70 countries, according to U.S. officials." [43]

Paradoxically, al-Suri credits what he thinks of as the North's assault with creating, on the larger scale of the whole or most of the Muslim world, the sense of unity that was the objective of pan-Arab nationalism. This makes possible a tactical adaptation to the strategy of the North. The adaptation is what he calls a "system of action, not a centralized, secret organization." [44] As I understand it, he is projecting a war in which Muslims motivated by anger against both imperialism and what he calls its "tails" (*adhyal*), the client or puppet post-imperial states, will individually and spontaneously rise. For him, guerrilla war and terrorism are just tactics; what really counts is motivation, and motivation becomes effective only when it is both widespread and, in the eyes of the actor, justified. Justification ultimately comes from the belief that God orders the action. Thus, like Sayyid Qutb, he develops a closed system based on the Quran with its own imperatives and justifications.

Although al-Suri stressed that the tactics and even the strategy of

jihad were flexible, he failed to reconcile the two approaches to the struggle. Should the movement seize a given piece of the earth and build there a full-blown Islamic state, as fundamentalists believe God commanded? Or should it avoid being dependent on a given territory and operate in as wide an arena as possible? The first was to become the thrust of the Islamic State, while the second was what the adherents of al-Qaida advocated. The military implications are fundamentally different: the single state can develop all of the attributes of the Islamic community but, inevitably, it is vulnerable to exactly those forces that al-Suri recognized as requiring a new strategy. In contrast, the waging of war by autonomous groups linked together only by common belief is less vulnerable but also deprives itself of the ability to create a functioning Islamic community. Al-Suri wanted it both ways, but most of those who read his works realized that a choice had to be made.

The choice for diffusion of action was made by Usama and, after he was killed by an American Special Forces team in 2012, by his principal follower, Zawahiri.[45] After the American invasion of Afghanistan, Usama went into hiding, or into the protective custody of the Pakistani intelligence service, in the Pakistani town of Abbottabad, where he was tracked down and killed by the American Special Forces team.[46] The organization Usama left behind seemed to be sidelined, but it has shown a remarkable ability to remain intact despite a massive assault by the intelligence services and military forces of almost all of the governments of America, Europe, and Asia.[47] It has proved to be at least partly what it claimed to be, the base (al-qaida) for movements all over the world. Indeed, at least relative to the Islamic State, it seems to be gaining in power. Which side of al-Suri's strategy is more likely to endure—al-Qaida's focus on the "far enemy" while coexisting with what it regards as imperfect societies or the Islamic State's focus on the "near enemy" and the creation of a functioning fundamentalist Islamic society—is yet to be determined.[48]

CHAPTER 42

The Islamic State

On July 1, 2014, a previously little-known former prisoner of the American army stood on the pulpit of a mosque in the Iraqi city Mosul and proclaimed the establishment of a caliphate. Ibrahim Awad Ibrahim Ali Muhammad al-Badri al-Samarari would henceforth be known as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the caliph of the Islamic State (ISIS). Embedded in those few words is a great deal of Iraqi, Arab, and Islamic history, as well as portents for the future. To outsiders, they appear recondite; to insiders, they are the essence of contemporary politics. That is why Ibrahim chose to identify his regime with the caliphate. So I will begin by parsing the concept of the caliphate.

The word "caliphate" conjures deep memories in the minds of Muslims. It takes them back to the time when Muslims believe Muhammad's prophecy coalesced into a unified, moral, enlightened state. That was the state as God directed Muhammad to create it. Then, just as it tamed its bedouin neighbors, defeated its Meccan rivals, concluded a treaty with the Arab and Jewish tribes of Madinah, and settled into the new way of life, Muhammad died, to his followers' shock and consternation. While he never claimed exalted status for himself, saying he was merely a messenger (*rasul*) charged with delivering God's words, it appears that some members of his community had already credited him with suprahuman, God-given attributes.

Two groups apparently did not share this view of Muhammad's qualities. The first was the collection of clans that had submitted to Muhammad's rule and considered their submission to his lordship to be personal. They had agreed to his being a sort of paramount tribal leader, but that relationship was vacated by his death. So the bedouin asserted that they were free to return to their traditional way of life, their own *sunnah,* and manage their affairs as they had been accustomed to doing. They turned on their heels and departed.

The second group was made up of Muhammad's intimates. While

they had disagreements among themselves, they appear to have fully accepted Muhammad's role as God's messenger. There is no reason to doubt, as some non-Muslim commentators have done, either Muhammad's or their belief in his mission.[1] Both truly believed that he was the mouthpiece of God. So when he died, communication with God ceased. No one else could take up his role as messenger.

But Muhammad had played another role as well. He had governed the community that had been established to manage human affairs as closely as possible, his followers believed, to the way God prescribed. That task was not ended by his death but indeed became more urgent. If it were not taken in hand, Muhammad's legacy would be ruined and his community would suffer the sort of calamity suffered by other messengers' failed societies. This danger was clearly spelled out in the Quran.

Thus, while the Arabic phrase *din wa dunya* suggests a division between religious affairs and worldly affairs, Muhammad's closest associates saw them as essentially the same. To perpetuate God's ordinances, they had to exercise worldly power. So it was that they banded together and chose one of their own to take on the worldly tasks needed to protect Muhammad's legacy of God's ordinances. That is the essence of the caliphate.

The caliphate was the succession to those of Muhammad's roles that could be undertaken by someone who was not God's messenger but could be trusted to protect the messages that had been already received. That person was to be called the caliph. To put it in modern organizational terms, the caliph was to be the chief operating officer of the Islamic community. There was no longer a chief executive officer. Muhammad's role could not be taken up by anyone in orthodox Sunni Islam.

Taking the leadership—one can hardly call it an "office"—upon the death of Muhammad in 632, his immediate successor, Abu Bakr, lasted just over two years. Upon his death in 634, and allegedly by his word, the function of imam—the man who "stood in front" and led the public prayers—was bequeathed to his close companion Umar, who was the first to use the title "caliph." The title was passed in turn to Uthman, a rich businessman who was assassinated in 656 by tribesmen who felt cheated by Uthman's governor in Egypt. At that point Ali became caliph. These four men are known as the "rightly guided" (*Rashidun*) or orthodox caliphs. The twenty-nine-year period of their rule was regarded by later Sunni Muslims as the model for all societies. Medina and Mecca under the first caliphate are to Muslims what the heavenly city of "the New Jerusalem" was to Saint Augustine.

Over time, there were changes from the original conception of the

caliphate and the role of the caliph. Under the Umayyads, the caliphs became the sort of paramount tribal leaders the bedouin had considered Muhammad to be. After eighty years of rule, the Umayyads were overthrown by a revolutionary movement that hoisted black flags—exactly as the partisans of the Islamic State are now doing—as the symbol of their revolution. Invigorated by a sense of divine mission, the rebels swept away what they saw as the apostate Umayyad regime. But along their line of march, the Iranian-inspired, esoteric movement was hijacked by more conservative and worldly forces. The conservatives then created a regime, the Abbasid caliphate, based on the model of the Sasanian Iranian empire.

Rival caliphates were established in Spain and Egypt, but the one we know best was proclaimed centuries later by the Ottoman sultans. The Ottoman rulers adopted the title "caliph" even before they had conquered Byzantium. In effect, they were proclaiming themselves to be in Islam what the Byzantine emperors were in Orthodox Christianity. Just as the Byzantine emperors legitimated their rule by their leadership of the church, the Ottoman sultans legitimated their rule by placing themselves within the caliphal tradition.

From the diversity of its history, the Ottoman sultans singled out the key element of the caliphate. Put in the simple phrase *din wa dunya,* they took their essential role to be the creation of a worldly environment, dunya, in which din, that is, Islam, could flourish. That may be taken as the essence of Ottoman statecraft. Sometimes they tried to do more, but their minimum obligation was to defend their part of the Muslim world from foreign invasion. They turned public welfare, health, education, and law over to the religious bureaucracy they supported and to the Sufi orders they tolerated. But both they and their enemies believed the existence of the caliphate gave the Ottoman rulers enormous influence throughout the Muslim world. By the end of the nineteenth century, when Britain, France, and Russia each ruled scores of millions of Muslims, all three powers feared that if the caliph issued a call for holy war, it would convulse their societies. Just as more recent Western societies viewed international communism as a mighty revolutionary force, the leaders of Britain, France, and Russia saw the same in Pan-Islamism.

But, at a critical moment during the First World War, as I discussed in Part 3, the issue of the caliphate was pivotal not only in initiating the Arab revolt but also, the British believed, in preserving security in their Indian empire. The British rulers of India always feared that Islam created a link to the Ottoman Empire and to independence movements in the areas attacked or dominated by the Russians, Dutch, and Italians. These fears were ascribed to Pan-Islam or even to Pan-Turkism. They had little substance but were credited with great

power. The reason that the British feared them was that they were haunted by memories of the revolt of their Indian army, the sepoys, in the "mutiny" of 1857. My reading is that whatever the British were doing about the caliphate was not crucial to the security of their empire in 1915, but at the time they were worried by the assumed threat. So, in effect, they decided to take out an insurance policy.

As I have discussed in Chapter 18, the British sought to undercut the potential threat to India of the Ottoman sultan-caliph, who had allied himself and his regime to Germany, by winning the support of the sharif of Mecca for the Allied cause. Time after time throughout the South of the world, the great imperial powers had divided the natives. If the sharif supported the British, this move might be useful in keeping the Indian Muslims quiet. But the sharif had no worldly power; he was a religious figure. And to counterbalance the Ottoman caliph, he had to become a caliph. How one could become a caliph, it appears from the records, was unclear both to him and to the British. The sharif could announce his assumption of the title, but he obviously did not think that was sufficient. He thought he needed British support to effect his claim. Put even more pointedly, he believed that the worldly power of the British had the right to determine who could be made caliph. What his discussions with the British reveal, I suggest, is how completely the North had come to dominate the South. Even in the most public manifestation of Islam, its potential leader believed that he needed British (Christian) certification to secure his (Islamic religious) position.

The position of the caliph had become imprecise. He was theoretically the head of the ummah, the entire Islamic community, in every colony, nation-state, or community around the world. But unlike the pope, the caliph was not the head of a church: there was no single religious establishment. Various figures were accorded roles in the congregation by consensus (as with the ayatollahs in Shiah Islam) or by government appointment (as with *mufti am,* or chief judges, and lesser judges) in the Ottoman Empire. These figures were scholars of Islamic law, but the caliph was not among them. He was not expected to be a scholar or a jurisconsult, nor did he have a role in determining the application of law. That was a matter for the courts and ultimately for the sultan or monarch. Outstanding figures such as Imam Shamil in the Caucasus and Imam Umar al-Mukhtar in Libya had combined these distinct roles, but they did so under the influence of Sufism and in response to foreign invasion. Ultimately, the caliph resembled Queen Victoria: he reigned but did not govern. Only if he combined din (religion) with dunya as the first caliphs, the Rashidun, had done could he also rule.

All this seemed irrelevant to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. He thought

the caliphate was a sham. As he put it, it had been dead for nearly a thousand years. To get rid of the relic, the Turkish Parliament under Atatürk's leadership abolished the office on November 1, 1922. But under the force of nostalgia, it lingered. As Atatürk later told the Grand National Assembly in his four-day-long speech of October 1927,

> Certain persons who wrongly believed that it was necessary, for religious and political reasons, to maintain the Caliphate proposed at the last moment when the decisions were to be taken, that I should assume the office of the Caliphate. I immediately gave a negative reply to these men. . . . Would it not be ridiculous to delude myself and you with an illusionary rôle which has neither sense nor right of existence? . . . Those who continue to occupy themselves with the chimera of the caliphate and thereby mislead the Mohamedan world, are nothing but enemies of the Mohamedan world and of Turkey. They are only ignorant or blind men who could attach hopes to such jugglery.

Jugglery? The concept lingered. Perhaps it was only nostalgia, but it again was swept into the sphere that Atatürk understood, power. When he announced the creation of the Islamic State, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi tried to cast it in the guise of the original caliphate. He sought to conjure the prestige and power of the four rightly guided caliphs, who exercised a combination of military, political, and religious authority. It was his claim to put himself in their role that so electrified Muslims—either in support or opposition—throughout the Islamic world.

Little is known about Ibrahim Awad Ibrahim Ali Muhammad al-Badri al-Samarari, and even that is suspect. This is partly because he lived through a period in which vast amounts of records were destroyed, and partly because, as a revolutionary with a $10 million price on his head, he was anxious to reveal as little as possible. It is believed that he was born in the Iraqi city of Samarra in 1971. He claims Muhammad as a direct ancestor (as do thousands of people throughout the Muslim world), so he added to his name the prestigious designation al-Quraishi to indicate descent from the tribe of the Prophet. He also identified himself with the city where the caliphate may be said to have reached its fulfillment, declaring himself "al-Baghdadi."

Baghdadi is believed to have studied first at the University of Baghdad and then at the Islamic University of Baghdad. The Islamic University was founded by Saddam Husain when he was fighting for his life after his costly defeat by the Americans in 1991. In the wake of his humiliating retreat from Kuwait, he rushed to swap the flag of nationalism for the costume of the mullah and sought to draw strength or at least popular approval by creating Muslim institutions. One of these was the Islamic University.

At this new university, Baghdadi apparently avoided the core subjects of the traditional universities—indeed, it is not clear how much of that syllabus was being taught—and concentrated on the recitation of the Quran. During this period he also became involved with the Muslim Brotherhood. This was a more serious issue than reciting, and he appears not only to have thrown himself into the movement but also to have learned enough about it to stake out his own position on its program: he found the Brotherhood too tame. That judgment led him to his first serious venture in the chaos that followed the American invasion. He put aside work on his doctoral thesis and helped to found a resistance group.

His group called itself "the Army of the Right Way and the Community" and appears to have carried out attacks on the Americans and the Iraqis working with them. There is no indication that the American authorities knew anything about his activities, but he was apprehended by chance on February 2, 2004, while visiting a friend who had been identified as a jihadi, and confined along with twenty-four other Iraqis in the huge American prison known as Camp Bucca.

There he found a new constituency. Most of the prisoners with whom he was thrown into contact had probably been associated with the Baathist movement and had followed Saddam in moving from suppression of Islam to advocacy. Baghdadi and other true believers had merely to continue what Saddam had begun. Whether sincerely or not, Saddam had prepared the ground, and Muslim clerics had begun to plant the seeds of their movement. Angry, defeated former Baathists dropped their secular beliefs and followed the clerics in the quest to recapture their dignity.

Unwittingly, the Americans had created the perfect environment: the concentration of disturbed and confused men in a space they could not leave, where their minimum life-sustaining needs were met but enforced idleness left them bored. Camp Bucca, like most detention centers for political prisoners, became a hothouse for the growth of militants.

In this hothouse, Baghdadi floated with ease. He used his ten months of imprisonment to proselytize his fellow inmates and to forge relationships that would be of value when he was released. Probably none of the warders knew what he was doing. My hunch is that they were pleased that his religious classes kept the rowdy prisoners quiet and did not understand or care what he and other prisoners were talking about. In December 2004, since he was not charged with a crime and was not identified as a jihadi but rather as a "civilian detainee," they released him.

When Baghdadi got out of Camp Bucca, probably surer of his opinions and abilities and presumably angrier, he found the Iraqi

jihadis committed to a more violent and determined program than before. Inspired and partly led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, a member of a Jordanian bedouin tribe, the al-Qaida-affiliated jihadis then operating in Iraq were involved in increasingly dramatic attacks.

Zarqawi was by temperament a violent man, but he was more than just vicious; he was shrewd. He developed a simple and effective strategy to deal with what was happening in Iraq around the year 2000.

At that time a savage civil war was raging. The long-suppressed Shiis were taking revenge on the long-dominant but now powerless Sunnis. The Shiis had ample reason to want revenge. During the centuries of (Sunni) Ottoman rule and throughout the twentieth century, they had been exploited, suppressed, and humiliated. In the last years of his dictatorship, Saddam drained the southern Iraqi swamplands in which many of them lived and drove many of them out of the country. They were the natural allies of the American invaders and occupiers. So the American overlords—few of whom knew anything about Iraq—made them the rulers, and the Shiis predictably indulged their anger. They drove the Sunnis out of their homes and "ethnically cleansed" complete neighborhoods. Excluded from aid, closed off from access to jobs, and driven into misery, the Sunnis would fight for their lives. But they were outnumbered by the American-supported Shiis and were leaderless and adrift.

Zarqawi saw this as a golden opportunity. By attacking the Shiis, he could perhaps weaken them, but, weakened or not, they would retaliate in fury. That in turn would terrify the Sunnis, who would have to fight or die. The greater the Sunni violence, the more furious the Shiah reaction, and the stronger the Shiah attacks, the more desperate the Sunnis would become. In their desperation, the only voice sounding their plight and offering a means to preserve their lives would be Zarqawi's "al-Qaida in Iraq."

Zarqawi's violent strategy was regarded by the small group remaining around the by-then-legendary jihadi Usama bin Ladin and his Egyptian guide, Ayman al-Zawahiri, as self-defeating and wrong. Both bin Ladin and Zawahiri found Zarqawi's violence "un-Islamic," particularly the killing of fellow Muslims and women and children, and they believed his ugly and widely publicized acts would alienate the public. There was also another fundamental difference between what bin Ladin and Zawahiri wanted and what Zarqawi was doing. Zarqawi's strategy addressed the "near enemy." He thought that the mujahidin had to win control of a single area before they could acquire the power to branch out. His concept was a sort of religious-insurgent version of single-state nationalism, *wataniyah*.

Bin Ladin and Zawahiri thought that wataniyah jihadism would not

work. A single state or territory would not have the power even to protect itself, much less to expand. They believed, and here I am putting words into their mouths, that the right strategy for al-Qaida was a religious-insurgent version of Pan-Arabism, *qawmiyah.* Put in their terms, this meant that the movement should concern itself with the whole Muslim community, the ummah, and concentrate on defeating the "far enemy," the Americans and their Arab proxies. On this strategic difference, bin Ladin and Zawahiri believed, rested the success or failure of the entire movement, so it was of extreme importance to them.

In December 2001, Zawahiri produced a manifesto calling for continuous violent action. Otherwise, he believed, Muslims—for whom as a group he had little respect—would lapse into passivity. They needed to be jostled awake with the most spectacular attacks insurgents could undertake. Only violent action would convince them that the North and the turncoat regimes they sponsored in the South could be overthrown. This could not be done through local action but required the battle to be taken to the enemy's territory. That was the aim of the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center in New York: "to burn the hands of those who are setting fire to our countries." Zawahiri was no less inclined to violence than Zarqawi and his followers: he differed in his choice of the targets.

It is not clear what role Baghdadi played in this debate, but he certainly took Zarqawi's side. Zarqawi was the man of the moment, whereas, in Baghdadi's judgment, bin Ladin and Zawahiri were men of the past; Zarqawi was fighting, whereas bin Ladin and Zawahiri were just talking; Zarqawi was present, whereas bin Ladin and Zawahiri were hiding far away in Afghanistan or Pakistan. Having reached these conclusions, Baghdadi took up a crucial role as a sort of political commissar, as the Russians would have seen it, in the al-Qaida in Iraq movement. Then he was given his major opportunity. The Americans killed Zarqawi on June 7, 2006, in a bombing attack and tracked down Zarqawi's successor and his son; rather than surrender, they blew themselves up in April 2010. The governing committee of the movement, reacting to a skillfully managed campaign by a former Baathist intelligence officer from Saddam's army, elected the thirty-nine-year-old Baghdadi as leader (*amir*). His choice of a nom de guerre echoed the beginning of the caliphate.

The death of Zarqawi's successor in April 2010 and the killing of bin Ladin thirteen months later did not resolve the conflict between the leaders. When he took leadership of al-Qaida, Zawahiri remained opposed to single-state insurgency and to at least the ugliest manifestations of extreme violence. Older and more mature than Baghdadi, he wanted to build a consensus of the then widely scattered

and disorganized insurgent groups. Baghdadi completely disagreed. He wanted to intensify the use of violence and give it maximum publicity. As he came to dominate the eleven-man executive committee (*shura*) of al-Qaida in Iraq, he started on the program to build what was essentially a state and to dominate, co-opt, or destroy other mujahidin movements. This led to a formal split in the al-Qaida movement. In response, in February 2014, Zawahiri expelled al-Qaida in Iraq, or, as it had become known, the Islamic State, from the al-Qaida movement.

Not directly involved in the power struggles between al-Qaida and what eventually became the Islamic State were several theoreticians or strategists of the holy war. The most important of these is the man who went under the name Abu Bakr Naji.

Whoever he really was, Naji (as I will call him) laid out the strategy that Baghdadi would follow. Naji picked up where Sayyid Qutb left off. He set out a history lesson, a guide for leaders, and a battle plan in *Idarah al-Tawhish.* The title has been translated as *The Management of Savagery,* but the word for "savagery," *tawhish*, is much more evocative than the English word suggests. The Arabic word was used in poetry to refer to the haunt of wild animals and suggests also the emotion of a cornered animal driven to desperation. Perhaps the best interpretation familiar to Western readers is something like what Thomas Hobbes meant by the state of nature, that is, being outside civilized society.[2]

Naji begins his interpretation at the point when the global North took control, degraded the culture of the Muslims, and divided the ummah, first into colonies and then into states. States had never existed in the Muslim world; the concept was a Western invention. When the colonial powers withdrew, the states they had created "fell into the hands of . . . military governments or civil governments supported by military forces."[3] Acting alone or with the connivance of native agents, who were motivated by lust or the desire for riches, they overturned the belief or social contract (*aqida*) that held the societies together. As Muslim societies weakened and became corrupted, the foreign powers and their local allies "squandered and plundered the resources of those states and spread inequity among the people." So, "since the fall of the caliphate . . . [there was] no religion and no world [no din wa dunya] or goodness, no justice and no world. Such is the state of affairs since the fall of the caliphate." [4]

True Muslims, however, can take heart from the fact that the great states' power is limited—unless, that is, the natives submit of their

own accord. So part of the task that must be undertaken is to show the people the evil results of the current state system. Of course, those now in power—whom he calls the *Taghut* (lifeless idols)—and their foreign allies realize this.[5] To disguise their objective and to win over the natives, they portray their rule "as non-coercive and world-encompassing . . . [and native] people as subservient to it not only through fear, but also through love because it spreads freedom, justice, equality among humanity, and various other slogans." [6]

In assigning blame for this condition, Naji indicts not only foreign powers and their venal local henchmen—although they are the major culprits—but also the mass of the people, of whom he takes a dimmer view than even Zawahiri: "The masses are the difficult factor. . . . We know that they are not generally dependable on account of [how the foreign imperialists and native turncoats have shaped them, and we realize that there will be] no improvement for the general public until there is victory. [Consequently, our strategy] is to gain their sympathy, or at the very least neutralize them."[7]

The only effective way to stop the slide into iniquity that began in the colonial era, Naji argues, is a strategy of violence. It cannot be accomplished by the creation of institutions, by a "theoretical model or by sparkling slogans." (On this he agrees with Qutb.) Reformers offer only a snare for youth that "prevents them from raising the [only true] slogan, '*jihad* is our path and death in the path of God is our noblest desire!' "[8] What must be undertaken is a long-term campaign to destroy the power of the imperialists and cleanse Islamic society.

Such a violent policy, he continued, is justified by Islamic law. Moreover, Westerners are hypocrites to inveigh against it on moral grounds. Look at their record, he demands: "In the 20th century alone they committed massacres against themselves and against the Muslims [on a scale] which had not been matched in all of human history. Even the most brutal peoples, like the Tatars [Genghis Khan's Mongols], did not shed as much blood as they did.[9] They frivolously spent the money of the Muslims and their own money—which is, in reality, the money of God—for spreading unbelief, moral depravity, and debauchery, while millions of humans died hungry, the number of which some rational minds would not believe even if it were recorded in a book."[10]

False prophets, the secularists, said they were reforming, he continued, but in fact they were destroying the moral fiber of the Islamic community. "As for the nationalists, the Baathists, and the democrats, they have afflicted the Islamic community by corrupting religion and by the ghastly destruction of souls. That which Saddam [Husain], [Hafez al-]Asad, [Hosni] Mubarak, [Saudi king] Fahd, the Socialist Party in Yemen, and others did with regard to this

destruction of souls alone surpasses those killed in all of the wars of the *jihadis* in this century."[11]

Since war is justified, it must be carefully planned and executed. It has several stages.

The first stage is the vexation (*nikaya*), provocation, and harassment of the enemy. The object is to create chaos in which the forces of the foreign powers and their local proxies become distracted and exhausted, while the Muslims learn that they have power and learn how to use it. Operations are of diverse kinds but should be dramatic, economical, and, in the early stages, mounted on a small scale independently by autonomous groups. What is needed at this stage is "advancement of groups made capable of vexation through drilling and operational practice so that they will be prepared psychologically and practically for the stage of the management of savagery."[12]

The second stage is the spread of savagery. "Note here that we said that the goal is to dislodge these regions [which have been selected for attack] from the control of the regimes of apostasy. It is the goal we are publicly proclaiming and which we are determined to carry out, not [just] the outbreak of chaos."[13] This second stage appears in Naji's order as guerrilla warfare. It is essentially what is now happening in Syria and Iraq.

The transition from small-scale, scattered terrorism to large-scale warfare marks the beginning of the third stage, which is the administration of savagery. The tasks at this stage include the establishment of "a fighting society" with requisite means of self-defense; the creation of an intelligence agency, both to learn the enemy's plans and to guard against internal subversion; and the construction of a sociopolitical program aimed at "uniting the hearts of the people by means of money and uniting the world by Sharia governance." This implies the creation of an enclave or territory under the movement's control, from which it can create a rudimentary state. From this base, it will become "possible to expand and attack the enemies in order to repel them, plunder their money, and place them in a constant state of apprehension and desire for reconciliation."[14]

The word "management" in Naji's title signals that he has moved beyond what Qutb considered acceptable. At one point he even advocates a course in business: "We must make use of books on the subject of administration, especially the management studies and theories which have been recently published, since they are consonant with the nature of modern societies. There is more than one site on the Internet in which one can obtain management books. I believe that they can be downloaded from the website *Mufakkirat al-Islam*. . . . Moreover, it is possible to obtain more management books and

resources from other sites on the Internet or from libraries and publishing houses."[15]

But he sees this as a dangerous if necessary policy. While "in our plan we open the door of management wide to those who have mastered its art, [we open] the door of leadership only to those who are reliable, even though there is a security apparatus which keeps watch over the two doors, monitoring the professionalism of the actions of the leaders and the managers in order to prevent infiltration."[16] Management, he says, is not the aim but only the means. What is to be managed is power. Here Naji tries to draw lessons from the Russian campaign in Afghanistan. The Afghans could not defeat the Russians in formal battles because the Russians had overwhelming military capacity. So the Afghans had to provoke them into overextending their forces in a wasting, unwinnable conflict that bankrupted their economy and lost the support of both their own people and the government they sought to protect.

America, he thought, will fall easily into the same trap. Driven by its own imperatives, "America will either seek revenge and the conflict will intensify or it will launch a limited war. In the case of the latter, its grudge will not be satisfied and it will not succeed in curbing this escalating expansion. America might have caused the downfall of the state of Afghanistan, which it had already planned for, or [the Taliban state] might have collapsed without the momentous events of September. . . . [In any case, America] will begin to confront the transformation of [its Afghan campaign] . . . into tens of thousands of groups . . . which will turn their strikes against it."[17]

As the campaign spreads and as America seeks to retaliate, it

> will not find a state on which it can take its revenge, because the remaining [states] are its clients. Thus, it will become clear to it that the regimes which support it cannot protect it from attacks and cannot preserve its strategic interests and the interests of its adopted daughter, Israel, in the region. It has no choice but to fall into the second trap[, that is, occupying] the region and setting up military bases. . . . [This will put it at] war with the population in the region. It is obvious at this very moment that it stirs up movements that increase the *jihadi* expansion and create legions among the youth who contemplate and plan for resistance. . . .
>
> So [the correct tactic is to] diversify and widen the vexation strikes against the Crusader-Zionist enemy in every place in the Islamic world, and even outside of it if possible, so as to disperse the efforts of the alliance of the enemy and thus drain it to the greatest extent possible. For example: If a tourist

> resort that the Crusaders patronize in Indonesia is hit, all of the tourist resorts in all of the states of the world will have to be secured by the work of additional forces, which [will cause] a huge increase in spending. If a usurious bank belonging to the Crusaders is struck in Turkey, all of the banks belonging to the Crusaders will have to be secured in all of the countries and the [economic] draining will increase. If an oil interest is hit near the port of Aden, there will have to be intensive security measures put in place for all of the oil companies, and their tankers, and the oil pipelines in order to protect them and draining will increase. If two of the apostate authors are killed in a simultaneous operation in two different countries, they will have to secure thousands of writers in other Islamic countries. In this way, there is a diversification and widening of the circle of targets and vexation strikes which are accomplished by small, separate groups. Moreover, repeatedly [striking] the same kind of target two or three times will make it clear to them that this kind [of target] will continue to be vulnerable.[18]

In short, Naji believes, violence is necessary—it is the school for an ignorant society and the hospital for a sick society. It weakens the enemy as it transforms corrupt societies into the pure Islamic societies of tomorrow.

Those who adopt struggle must confront reality: "One who previously engaged in *jihad* knows that it is naught but violence, crudeness, terrorism, frightening [others], and massacring." Jihad cannot be carried out with softness, "whether the softness is in the mode of inviting others to join [the *jihad*], taking up positions, or [undertaking] the operations, since the ingredient of softness is one of the ingredients of failure for any *jihadi* action. . . . Consequently, there is nothing preventing us from spilling their blood; rather, we see that this is one of the most important obligations since they do not repent, undertake prayer, and give alms. All religion belongs to God."[19]

Naji applies the pre-Islamic concept of revenge as the only way of achieving security: "Regardless of whether we use harshness or softness, our enemies will not be merciful to us if they seize us. Thus, it behooves us to make them think one thousand times before attacking us."[20] Only the certainty of revenge will prevent the West and its native agents from harming Muslims. "No harm comes to the *Ummah* or to us without [the enemy] paying a price."[21] Not quite an eye for an eye, but certainly a death for a death. Terror attacks have the dual objective of deterring attacks on Muslims and "spreading hopelessness in the hearts of the enemy."

Terror attacks are the essence of his strategy, and he devotes much of his book to explaining how they can be carried out. The enemy can be made to "pay the price" anywhere: "If the apostate Egyptian regime undertakes an action to kill or capture a group of *mujahids,* the youth of *jihad* in Algeria or Morocco can direct a strike against the Egyptian embassy and issue a statement of justification, or they can kidnap Egyptian diplomats as hostages until the group of *mujahids* is freed. . . . The policy of violence must also be followed such that if the demands are not met, the hostages should be liquidated in a terrifying manner, which will send fear into the hearts of the enemy and his supporters."[22] Certainly, the Islamic State has applied Naji's program of horror in its acts, making a recorded and widely published display of the cold-blooded execution of captives and liquidating dissidents and those unlucky enough to be in the wrong place at the wrong time on a scale that is proportionate to that of any actions performed by the Germans, Russians, or Chinese.

Naji's politico-military doctrine can be described as a Muslim version of what Mao Zedong and Ho Chi-minh proclaimed as their kind of war: a combination of terrorism, when that is the only means of operation; guerrilla warfare, when that becomes possible as areas of operation are secured; and, ultimately, when the conflict "matures," the creation of a warlike but independent state-society, which Naji thinks of as a new caliphate. This is a sequence that played out in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries all over the world. It is ugly, brutal, and costly, but it has nearly always eventually succeeded. Whatever may be the outcome now in Syria, Naji gives us a plan of how his followers intend to fight, there and perhaps throughout the world. As he tells us, the struggle is "not an economic, political, or social battle" for territory against state-like opponents but rather "a battle of the proclamation of the single God against unbelief and faith against polytheism."[23]

Nothing quite like it has been seen on the world stage since the great wars of religion in Europe, some four hundred years ago.

PART SIX

Afterword: The Parable of the Blind Brahmins

In an often-quoted parable, two blind Brahmins cannot agree on what an elephant is like because one takes hold of the massive trunk and the other takes in hand the little tail. The parable is often quoted because it captures the problem we all face: at best, our knowledge is incomplete. We can never know enough, and what we know often depends on where we begin. Our "cowboy philosopher" Will Rogers (among many others) carried the dilemma a step further: "It isn't only what we don't know that gives us trouble; it is often what we know that ain't so."

With both the Brahmins and Will Rogers in mind, I have attempted to lay out in this book, as accurately as I could, what I think is actually so—not what we would like to be so—about the elephant that is the relationship between the global North and the global South. I have taken to heart Arthur Koestler's admonition that the job of the historian is "not one of choosing, according to temperament or mood, the brighter or the darker side, but of perceiving both together, of noticing the contrast, and inquiring into its causes."

It is clear, I believe, that unless we understand even that with which we disagree, we have little hope of achieving the peace and security we all want. So I will attempt to bring the parable of the blind Brahmins into focus, starting with the problem of perspective: From where we stand, how well can we see?

CHAPTER 43

Trunks and Tails

It is obvious that the Brahmin representing the global South should have poor eyesight. Almost all of the South is still suffering from what I have called post-imperial malaise. Many of the peoples of the Muslim world have struggled for generations to regain their independence, and the costs have been immense. Whole societies have been conditioned by the violence of their efforts at "national liberation." Nearly all have been deprived of the experience of governing themselves, and, lacking that experience, most did not develop the institutions of self-rule.

Consequently, upon achieving nominal independence, the Africans and Asians took up where the departing imperialists had left off: they developed native copies of the colonial governments from which they had sought to free themselves. When the civilians who had led the independence movements moved into the colonial governors' former offices, many were soon pushed out by military dictators, most of whom had served in the armed forces of the imperialists. Even when they took off their uniforms, these men remained generals, more accustomed to giving orders than to engaging in the give-and-take of civilian politics. Democracy is a fragile plant that requires the fertilizer of public participation; it has not taken well in the deserts and steppes of the post-imperial Muslim world, while militarism has adapted to the thin soil of weak societies and thrived.

Military dictators are not the worst leaders one can have. More damaging to their societies are the warlords who, knowing the insecurity of their tenure, devote themselves to draining their countries of as much wealth as they can hide abroad. Hanging on to the sources of wealth, which in the postcolonial world equates, at the top, to power and, lower down the scale, to influence, the ruling group often tolerates or engages in large-scale crime and abuse of their fellow citizens. Corruption and tyranny metastasize in weak societies.

It follows that those who profit from corruption and despotism do not want an informed public. They discourage and often seek to limit serious discussion on issues of public policy. With the media frequently bought, "guided," or restricted, communication is often kept on the small scale of the private house, the café, or the *chaihane* (the convivial tea house or garden), as was customary under imperialism. Often these discussion groups are infiltrated, monitored, or harassed.

Even among those who can "see," that is, those who can access information, few are educated to the level at which they can understand the economic and political realities their countries face and envisage the options they might consider. Their grasp on even the elephant's tail is weak. In the struggle for daily bread, fewer still have the leisure to ponder the whole body of the elephant. In anger, frustration, or disillusionment with the results of their liberation, many just escape into diversions. I have watched crowds of very poor Egyptians afflicted with hunger, unemployment, bad health, and wretched housing, as well as corrupt government, throw themselves into a frenzy over soccer. There, as in Rome long ago, rulers have understood how circuses can divert the masses.

Yet for all these restraints, all these causes of blindness, even the uneducated ponder the reason for their dissatisfaction. Their discontent is hard to escape, and their lives are often filled with disappointments, shortfalls, and illusory hopes. I have sat in coffeehouses and listened to lively and sometimes well-informed arguments about the roots of poverty, the malfeasance of officials, and the causes of war. Invariably, two strands are woven into the discussion: imperialism as the source of their misery and Islam as their salvation. Consequently, I have dwelt on them in my analysis of the Muslim world.

What about the other Brahmin, the character representing the global North? That is us. How firm is our grip on the trunk, and how clear is our view of the whole elephant? Logically we should have a much clearer view. We have not been plagued by the traumas of imperialism; almost all of us are literate; practically none of us is on the brink of starvation; and a large portion of us have time to learn about the world. But there is much evidence that we are not better informed—or even as well informed—as the people in the coffeehouses. They are motivated by pain; we are not. They feel insecure; we feel secure. They feel the need to understand; we can afford not to. Whereas those who speak a minor language have to learn another, as speakers of a dominant language, many of us feel no need to do so. They must learn about us and learn our language. We do not need to bother. And it is not only in the often-difficult

languages of Asia and Africa that we cannot communicate; few of us are at ease in French, German, or Italian. When I once lectured at the Soviet Academy of Sciences, I could speak in English; had a Russian lectured in Russian even at Harvard, Yale, or the University of Chicago, very few could have understood him.

It is not only the need to communicate that is missing; it is often basic information. In many years of talking with college students and participants in public affairs groups throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe, I have found that while most people are informed on events in their immediate neighborhoods, few even know the locations of other countries. Sadly, it seems that Americans are the least informed. My anecdotal impressions are borne out by careful surveys. A Roper poll of Americans aged eighteen to twenty-four for *National Geographic,* conducted from 2003 to 2006—right in the middle of the Afghan war—found that nine out of ten of us did not know where Afghanistan was. Six in ten could not find Iraq on a map, and, astonishingly, only five in ten could place New York accurately on a map.

One might say in their defense that these young people are just getting started in their careers and do not have time or energy to learn about the world. But their ignorance was mirrored by some of the older, established, and prosperous men and women who were chosen to represent America abroad as ambassadors. In appearances before the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee that was to pass on their competence, some revealed that they did not know what language was spoken or what kind of a government existed in the country to which they were being appointed. One could not find his assigned country on the map.[1]

Ignorance is not only geographic but also temporal. Even among those who have a better grasp of geography and world affairs, there seems to be a sort of cutoff date beyond which few events are remembered. As children we all learned that “in 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue.” There are not many other remembered dates. When college students are asked to date the French Revolution, many miss it by at least a generation; they are usually more accurate on the Russian Revolution, give or take a decade; and practically everyone has at least heard of events of the previous few years, like the 9/11 bombings. But few could accurately date the Vietnam War; fewer still the Korean War. I have found that what happened more than about half a century ago generally fades into myth. Some observers would place the cutoff date at only five to ten years.

More importantly, history is not understood as a process—a continuum leading from the past through the present toward the future. Rather it is treated as a more or less random collection of

happenings, information, or stories with no serious consequence for the present. Put in terms of the blind Brahmin parable, many of us do not even try to follow the trunk up to the body but instead stop at the tip. The tip is what we think matters. That, after all, is the part that grabs the peanut. How the tip is attached to the trunk and then to the body is information we do not think we need. Things that happened "back then" are over. Henry Ford spoke for many of us when he said, "We want to live in the present, and the only history that is worth a tinker's damn is the history that we make today." This blindness makes it difficult for us to understand why people do what they do—or to imagine what they might do in the future.

Not only did our two Brahmins fail to envisage the elephant, neither made an attempt to understand the other's viewpoint. Those of us in the relatively rich, comfortable, progressive, and secure North find it difficult to see why the people of the South fail to understand us. After all, most of us believe that what we are doing is the right way to do things. To us, this seems obvious: our system works; theirs does not. We are rich; they are poor. So, they need to understand our ways; we do not need to understand theirs. They just need to drop the tail and pick up the trunk. Getting hold of the trunk is the key to success. This mind-set is so damaging to the achievement of the peace and security we seek that I must dilate on the causes of our inability to understand the people of the South.

I have used the phrase "people of the South" throughout this book. It was a handy way to lump together the blend of experiences that set them apart from "the people of the North." But now I want to backtrack or at least to add new dimensions.

First, it needs to be stressed that we are all—North and South—part of humanity. We all are born, grow up, age, and finally die. We share the fundamental attributes of our species. But around the world, we have developed the adaptive nuances that we call cultures, and the attributes of culture vary. It is within the cultural context that recent and contemporary events take on meaning, shaped by interactions between memory, belief, and experience. From this process emerge our viewpoints and therefore our ability to empathize. It is this blend of memory, belief, and experience in the Muslim world that I have tried to make clear in this book. I have felt it necessary to clarify the particular combination of memory, belief, and experience of the Muslim world's peoples precisely because they have produced a worldview so different from that of us in the North.

Ironically but logically, the fact that we in the North have been able to avoid the traumas of imperialism, have led relatively secure lives, and, at least in living memory, have avoided famines and plagues has made it more difficult for us to understand the peoples of the South

than if we had shared their experiences. Just as most of us do not speak the languages of the South because we do not need to, we are not sensitive to the disasters other peoples have suffered because American society has not suffered war on its own soil since the Civil War. We have fought wars, but always on the territory of other peoples, not in our homeland. Our isolation has given us a sense of security, of hope for the future, and even of principled superiority. Some believe we are therefore "exceptional." Their afflictions are things we can hardly comprehend—and we do not need to try.

Lack of comprehension, much less empathy, has been most evident in religion. As I recounted in this book, the Dutch provoked war in Indonesia by their insensitivity to the natives' religious beliefs. In India, British officers could not be bothered to reassure their Hindu and Muslim soldiers on a potential violation of their religion by the introduction of new equipment, and thus they precipitated the great sepoy revolt. I have portrayed a number of other examples from Central Asia to Central Africa.

It seems to me that "religion" should not be viewed as only a theological question. Theology teaches us that the three major monotheistic religions share a large part of their fundamental beliefs. Islam and Judaism are particularly close. History teaches us, however, that people are willing to fight to the death over the fine points.

But religion is also a sort of banner under which many different forces congregate. Being aware of their variety, we call them political, economic, cultural, or ethnic, but in the rough-and-tumble of events, they often merge into single systems of belief. So it has been that under the flag of Islam there is both general unity and specific diversity, both absolute certainty and pervasive doubt, both desire for accommodation and rejection of intermingling.

Islam worked out an approach to internal and external toleration, but its system of accepting difference is now under major strain. How to reconcile diversity has been one of the major issues of the modern interchange between peoples of the North and South. It is an issue to which those with superior power are often insensitive.

Insensitivity to cultures, which are often embedded in religion, frequently enabled racial attitudes to come into dominance. Under imperialism, natives generally did not count as human beings. In British India, an English Christian religious leader found that his flock regarded Indians as "brutes." Even elderly Indian officials were not given chairs and had to walk to appointments with junior English officers. When Indians revolted in the name of religion, the British, goaded by racist feelings, blew some of them apart from the muzzles of cannon, hanged or shot tens of thousands, and destroyed dozens of villages. In Algeria, torture was justified because the natives were not

quite human. It was not just Joseph Conrad's Kurtz who was inhuman; it was all of us who gawked at aliens as if they were animals in zoos.

I find this attitude particularly disturbing in the French writer Albert Camus. Having himself experienced the humiliations of the Nazi occupation of France, he was quite impervious to even more degrading actions when done by the French to the Algerians. I visited several concentration camps the French had built and filled with Algerians, many of them just children. They had no gas chambers, but otherwise they were similar to Dachau or Buchenwald. What made this acceptable to Frenchmen who had been personally harmed by Nazi oppression and even to humanists like Camus was that the people of the South were seen not as individual human beings but rather as categories or masses. In his takeoff on Camus in his novel *Meursault, contre-enquête* the Moroccan writer Kamel Daoud remarks that Camus uses the word "Arab" twenty-five times without ever naming the person.[2]

Camus speaks for us all. Reports of thousands of deaths of people of the South draw little reaction, whereas the death of a single individual of the North is a tragedy. Unless or until we can see both events as tragedies, I believe that we will find neither peace nor security.

American actions in the Philippines and Vietnam were at least as brutal as those of the French: "Asians feel no pain" is a common saying. Americans excelled in coining insulting names for natives. Israelis, coming from the horror of the Holocaust, found no incongruity in destroying the Palestinian community and driving nearly a million people from their homes. They could do this, in part, because, as Prime Minister Golda Meir said (and many Israelis believe), there was "no such thing as Palestinians."

Disregard of the people of the South goes to the heart of the clash between imperialism and the assertion of common humanity. This theme runs through events of the last three centuries, particularly in Africa and Asia. Not only for Muslims, but particularly for them, the European tendency to disregard the humanity of the weak is the ultimate blindness. Shakespeare has Shylock put it eloquently for the Jews in *The Merchant of Venice* (act 3, scene 1):

> Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs,
> dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with
> the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject
> to the same diseases, healed by the same means,
> warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer
> as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed?
> If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us,
> do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?

> If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that.
> If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility?
> Revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his
> sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge.
> The villainy you teach me, I will execute.

We have slowly learned to apply Shylock's wisdom to the Jews, but not yet to the Muslims. In part, I think, this is because—with horrible exceptions in Europe—Jews have become friends, neighbors, and participants, while the peoples of the South are mostly out of sight.

Only recently have we Americans become aware of our own "people of the South," our fellow compatriots who have suffered in ways resembling the experiences of many in Africa and Asia. As we learn more about the Afro-Asian world through them, their experiences can teach us a different dimension of our world. Their history, not the experience of the tiny minority of white Anglo-Saxons of which I am a part, offers us insights into the South. Let me enlarge on this point, as I think it is crucial to the message of this book.

Not until I was in my late teens did my generation of white southerners begin to appreciate the experience of American "people of color." It has taken us a very long time, and what happened to their ancestors is still little appreciated, but the modern black circumstance is now somewhat better known.[3]

This is not the case with the Native Americans, whose experience we have hardly begun to appreciate. Growing up on a Texas ranch in the center of what, in the lifetime of my grandfather, had been Comanche territory, I did not even know the true name of those people, Nemene.[4] Nor did any of my acquaintances know anything about them. As I rode fences, it never occurred to me that the land my father and grandfathers had fenced was taken from them. I do not just criticize the blind Brahmin; I have been him.

Another aspect of blindness is the propensity to overlook harm done to other people. An American newspaper editor once said that a dogfight on Main Street is more important than a war in a distant country. We can relate effectively to other people only when we are near them. We help people we know or can see. The Red Cross can raise any amount of money for our poor neighbors, but America's overseas aid programs had to be hidden in Defense Department budgets. The motivation for giving the money we gave was not to help Africans and Asians but to protect ourselves from them. At least, that was what moved our congressional representatives during my time in government service.

Distance—both geographical and cultural—also enables us to excuse ourselves when, intentionally or not, we harm other people.

During the Vietnam War, I asked some young pilots how they dealt with having burned villagers alive with napalm. They shrugged: it was just war. Whether the people who died horrible deaths were children and old people or soldiers made no difference. But when I asked if they could pour napalm on a nearby person and set him alight, they were horrified at the thought. We can all do at a distance what we would never do up close.

This natural propensity is followed by our focus on individuals, not masses. We put faces on those we relate to; faceless people are just numbers. As the saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words: the picture of one individual comes alive, whereas a report of the misery or death of a thousand does not move us. I find this to be characteristic of people everywhere. The picture of a little girl running down the road, burned by napalm, probably hastened the end of the Vietnam War; few of us had previously been touched by the devastation of whole villages and the deaths of hundreds of thousands.

This common characteristic also creates vulnerabilities that can be used against us. On the one hand, we are shocked, and are meant to be shocked, when a suicide bomber kills two or three of “our” people. Those who carry out the attacks hope they will convince us to retreat or tilt us into actions that are against our interests or are self-defeating. But on the other hand, our insensitivity to distant and massive death makes possible the entry into and prosecution of wars. In Iraq, probably a million people died, and in Afghanistan at least one child in five died before the age of five. Consequently, we are open to manipulation by both our enemies, who think we will be deterred by terrorist attacks, and our leaders, who judge that we are prepared to tolerate unlimited death and destruction.

And when the killing is accomplished by unseen drones, manipulated by “pilots” thousands of miles away from the target, there is even less contact. Now, we are told, our defense industrialists are experimenting with fully automatic killing machines that can decide issues of life or death remotely and without human intervention.

CHAPTER 44

What the North Did to the South

Memories of imperialism are deep, and they helped create much of the world's disorder and danger today. We do ourselves no favors by airbrushing away the scars. Rather than try to hide them, I have followed the admonition of that great warrior the Duke of Wellington, who instructed the artist painting his portrait to show him "warts and all."

My story shows many warts. Beginning at various times after Christopher Columbus led the way across the Atlantic and the Portuguese plunged down the West African coast, the actions of the North have been uniformly destructive and sometimes genocidal. As first the Europeans and then the Russians and Chinese gained in power, they thrust into the South, destroying native states, upending societies, and suppressing religious orders.

The humiliation and wholesale massacres of populations carried out by imperialists, though largely forgotten by the perpetrators, remain today vivid to the descendants of the victims. America took its place in the parade with the acquisition of the Philippines from the Spanish colonial power. Few remember that America was once itself a part of the global South and had fought a revolution against the leading imperialist power, Great Britain.

During the American Revolution, King George III explained the real reason the British thought they had to defeat the colonists: exploitation of its empire was what made England a significant power. If it allowed the colonists to escape from its monopoly on trade, the king said, "this island would be reduced to itself, and soon would be a very poor island indeed. . . . If any one branch of the Empire is allowed to cast off its dependency . . . the others will infallibly follow the example [and] the state will be ruined."[1]

This sentiment was echoed a century later by the great English imperialist Joseph Chamberlain: "If tomorrow it were possible, as some people apparently desire, to reduce by a stroke of the pen the

British Empire to the dimensions of the United Kingdom, half at least of our population would be starved."[2] Absent its empire, the imperialists feared, England would become a pauper among nations.

Generally, such fears could be shrugged off, but as the concept of imperialism came to be challenged, the reason for its existence was better hidden. The way to hide it was in plain sight. Colonialism was to be seen not as exploitation but rather as the way to pass Western civilization to the benighted dark-skinned people of the South. White men must shoulder the burden, however reluctantly, and perform the duties of civilization. The places where they were to operate would no longer be called colonies but instead "mandates" and "protectorates," whose officials were teachers and the natives their pupils. If the pupils got rebellious and strayed, the teachers naturally had to punish them, for their own good.

The white man had to replace the culture and institutions of the dark-skinned people of the South, which were a block to civilization and progress. If the Southerners resisted, they had to be forced to accept the imposition of order. Generally, the imperialists' task was easy. They could divide and conquer; they could bribe or cajole; they had organization, skill, and, as the Anglo-French man of letters Hilaire Belloc quipped, "Whatever happens, we have got / the Maxim [machine] gun and they have not."

Throughout the age of imperialism, people in the North felt almost no compunction in oppressing, starving, or massacring peoples of the South. They justified their actions—when justification was useful or necessary—by statements that should horrify us today. Asians and Africans "feel no pain"; the "only language they understand is force"; "black men's brains are different from the brains of white men"; "they are fanatics"; they "don't believe in law and order"; "you cannot trust the native"; "if they are petted and spoiled . . . they will only ruin themselves." These attitudes both explained and justified violence: the less outsiders knew about the natives—the less they believed that the natives were fellow human beings—the more likely they were to favor the use of violence. Tyranny did not require learning difficult languages or appreciating exotic cultures. As the British governor of Bombay wrote in 1875, "We hold India by the sword."

When I was a young ranch hand, British India was far from my ken. But I benefited from Columbus's mistake when he thought American natives were Indians. I had my own Indians. I learned about them in that great university of our times, the movies. What I knew was what Hollywood showed me. I knew that the Native Americans, America's own people of the South, were always about to scalp innocent whites. Fortunately, the Seventh Cavalry was rushing to the rescue, to carry out the "War on Terror."

The war on terror is not new. I grew up with it. It was not until long after my childhood that the movies hinted, just hinted, at the reality. I did not learn until I was over fifty years old what really happened to the Native Americans. The supposedly cold-blooded Comanches, I later learned, were actually members of a sophisticated nation-state that carried on widespread trade and engaged in complex diplomacy with other Native American nations and even with the white settlers. But they stood in the settlers' way, so during the nineteenth century they were reduced to a quarter of their population by the Seventh Cavalry and the Texas Rangers. Our government paid a bounty for Comanche scalps. (It was said that many a poor Mexican peasant paid the supreme price for the greed of bounty hunters.) When the survivors surrendered, the women and children were separated from the men, who were exiled. Comanche society was "disappeared."[3]

The really bad Native American, as we all learned from the movies, was the terrible terrorist Geronimo. He rampaged through the Western plains, devastating white settlements and massacring men, women, and children. He personified the forces of evil, backwardness, and savagery. The real Geronimo, accompanied by a band that rarely numbered more than forty warriors, fought for twenty years a tactically brilliant, savage, but always hopeless rearguard action against white imperialism. Geronimo's definition of terrorism was very different from that of the white settlers. It always is. As the saying goes, "One man's freedom fighter is another man's terrorist." Geronimo would have understood the great resistance fighters of Africa and Asia, and they him.

If Americans know little about the Native Americans, we know far less about other societies; I have mentioned the Native Americans to demonstrate that Asian and African history is not so exotic as the names, geography, and languages suggest. As the great English poet John Donne put it, we are all "a part of the main." This is a message to be derived from this slice of world history.

We, the people of the North, do not remember much of the age of imperialism. What "we" did to "them" is largely forgotten, if indeed it was ever known. I have mentioned that the people of Belgium, to take perhaps the most dreadful example, thought they were uplifting and benefiting the people of their piece of Africa, the Congo. Only in the last few years have they begun to inform themselves about what was done in their name. They have learned that King Leopold conducted a holocaust that killed at least twice as many as in the ugliest event in modern European history, the Nazi slaughter of Jews and Gypsies. Compared to Leopold, Adolf Hitler was a beginner. The Belgians did not use gas chambers, but village by village they butchered ten to

fifteen million Congolese. They made examples of an untold number of others who failed to produce the goods demanded of them by cutting off their hands or feet.

Joseph Conrad catches something of the horror of Leopold's Congo in his novel *The Heart of Darkness.* But the Congo was planned to be only the beginning. Leopold tried to get the British to make over to him or lease all the Sudan south of Khartum. The British refused—not out of fellow feeling for the natives but on the basis of their African strategy. Leopold also sent agents to get the Italians to cede Eritrea "and the whole of the Abyssinian sphere of influence as defined in the Anglo-Italian Treaty of 1891 to the Belgian *Société Congolaise de Colonisation et d'Exploitation.*" [4] The Italians fortunately did not act. Had any of these moves happened, the death and destruction he wreaked on Africa would almost certainly have been twice the horror Leopold caused.

In Java, the Dutch clamped a colonial regime on the natives, and when they tried to reassert their independence, the Dutch killed about three hundred thousand "rebels" between 1835 and 1840; they similarly suppressed Sumatran "rebels" between 1873 and 1914. In Algeria, after the bitter fifteen-year-long war that began with the 1830 French invasion, the French stole the natives' farmlands, razed hundreds of villages, massacred untold numbers of Algerians, and imposed an apartheid regime on the survivors. In Central Asia, as Leo Tolstoy recounts in his stories and novels, the Russians invaded, impoverished, or drove away previously thriving populations in their bitter war in the Caucasus, virtually wiping out whole societies, and later engaged in the Crimea in what requires the coining of a new word to encapsulate the crime: "ethnocide." The Chinese did not "virtually" wipe out a whole society—they actually exterminated an entire people. Even the name of that people, the Zunghars (like the names of many Native Americans) is hardly remembered. In Libya, the Italian Fascists killed about two-thirds of the population. In India, after the attempted revolt of 1857, the British destroyed the Mughal Empire; they starved, virtually enslaved, and shipped to other of their colonies, under the euphemism "indentured labor," hundreds of thousands of destitute Indians. During the Second World War, by Winston Churchill's personal decision, they actually starved to death about three million Indians. Overall, the British may have been responsible for the starvation of as many as thirty-five million Indians.[5]

Holocausts are hard to forget. As the foremost Jewish terrorist/freedom fighter, Yitzhak Shamir, said of the European Holocaust, he would neither forget nor forgive. The Jewish community and Israel understandably spend much effort to make sure that the children and

grandchildren of the survivors do not forget. The African and Asian victims of imperialism have not been as successful in preserving the memory of their own holocausts, but there is no doubt that it is a motivating force behind al-Qaida and ISIS. Even among those Muslims —the overwhelming majority—who oppose violent fundamentalism, the memory of imperialism resonates. Whether we remember it or not, the people of the South do.

Both the British in India and Egypt and the French in Algeria drove the people they conquered down into misery. I have quoted the acute early observer of the American people Alexis de Tocqueville remarking on the decline of the standard of living of the Algerians under French rule. In India and Egypt, the British engaged in perhaps the most thoroughgoing policy of "deindustrialization" ever recorded: their publicly proclaimed policy was to destroy native industry to make way for their own products. For what they did just in India, a modern Indian writer has calculated that a fair estimate of the reparations, in today's money, would amount to $3 trillion.[6]

The extraction of oil, rubber, tin, and other "primary products" and the suppression of native processing industries were driving forces in North-South relations for much of the last century, but the really painful memory is humiliation. We know from our own experience that a sense of weakness and inability to defend oneself nearly always leads to violence. I have described in this book that result throughout Asia and Africa. Even when outbursts of anger are suicidal, as they almost always have been, people throw themselves into the fray. As they are destroyed, others take their places. Frustration, anger, and humiliation account, according to the perceptive Israeli commentator Uri Avnery, for the frequent violent outbursts among the Palestinians. As he wrote,

> For the last two hundred years, the Arab world has been humiliated and oppressed. The humiliation even more than the oppression has been seared into the soul of every Arab boy and girl. Once the whole world admired Arab civilization and Arab science. During the European Dark Ages, barbaric Westerners were dazzled by Islamic culture. No young Arab can abstain from comparing the splendor of the past Caliphate to the squalor of contemporary Arab reality—the poverty, the backwardness, the political impotence. . . . A huge reservoir of resentment has been building up in the Arab world, unseen and unnoticed by the Western powers that be.[7]

To distort somewhat the blind Brahmin parable, we can say that the little tail remembers when it was the trunk. Memories of the great days when Muslims were the leaders of the world's civilization still resonate in Muslim societies and shape what contemporaries believe is possible, just, and crucial to their lives. The more endangered they feel, the stronger becomes the need to remember the halcyon days.

Assertion of this reassuring memory was universal in the depths of imperialism; today it is almost blinding. As applied to the al-Qaida outburst inspired by Usama bin Ladin, the US State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research, in an intelligence assessment of August 28, 1998, stated that the "feeling of injustice and victimization —and growing conviction among Arab elites and masses alike that US policies prop up corrupt regimes; favor Israel at Arab expense; and are designed to divide, weaken and exploit the Arab world—are rooted in negative Arab perceptions of specific US policies. Bin Ladin rides this tide of opinion. Though few Arabs endorse his terrorism, many share at least some of his political sentiments."[8]

This feeling of humiliation is manifested in many ways and in many places. One of the best known was in Algeria. Much discussed by both Algerians and the French regarding the Algerian revolution was torture. Some French writers referred to it as "the cancer of democracy." Torture was perhaps the worst aspect of the war, but the French also killed about three hundred thousand Algerians. Even more bitterly felt was the sting of humiliation. The Franco-Martiniquan psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, in his *Les damnés de la terre* (*The Wretched of the Earth*), came to believe that the entire Algerian nation was traumatized by the horrors of the colonial occupation and the years of war.[9] His account was dismissed by some Europeans and Americans as just a polemic, but there is much evidence to explain his findings. One set of images is particularly striking. To put it in context, one must begin by understanding that in both Berber and Arab societies, the duty of a man is to protect the life and honor of his family. The conditions of war often made this impossible. Particularly women in remote villages were without any protection from the casual brutality of the European soldiers in the French Army and the Foreign Legion. There are many photographs, probably taken by the soldiers themselves, showing a teenaged, or even younger, Algerian girl being "groped" (probably shortly before being raped). This must have happened hundreds or thousands of times that were not recorded. The girls' fathers had either been killed or taken away, but their shame, incapacity, and humiliation were carried by millions of Algerians long after the fighting had ended. It is the sense of helplessness before power that Fanon believed to be the key element in the destruction of the African personality.

Fanon aside, I have often heard in Africa and Asia the charge that we of the North have double standards arising from race and religion. When "they" kill a European, we react with horror. We are right to do so. Any murder is abominable. But when we kill an African or Asian, or even large numbers of Africans or Asians, we hardly notice. As I mentioned in Chapter 31, everyone in the North was horrified by the

December 21, 1988, bombing of the Pan American Airways flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, which killed 270 people—surely a horrible crime—but few had even noticed when, five months earlier, a US Navy guided missile cruiser shot down an Iran Air passenger plane in Iran airspace and killed 290 people.[10] The United States never apologized. The widely drawn moral is that African and Asian lives do not count. This is an issue that transcends foreign affairs. In America today, we seem to be becoming more sensitive: an increasing number of our fellow citizens assert that "black lives matter."

The charge that imperialists disregarded the native peoples is partly manifested geographically. On maps of Africa, perhaps the most striking feature is the prevalence of neat, straight lines. They cut right through traditional societies. Locally, the new frontiers made no sense. The scramble for Africa was decided in Berlin, and the division of Central Asia was determined in Saint Petersburg. Indonesia became (briefly) British because of Napoleon. Kazakhs moved into Zungharia because a Chinese emperor in Beijing ordered the Zunghars exterminated. The states of the Middle East were established not by local affinities or accommodations to resources but because Mark Sykes and François Georges-Picot, acting on behalf of the British and French governments, reached a deal, which was later amplified to accommodate the Russians, Italians, and Greeks. Taken together with what had happened in Africa and was happening in the Far East and the Middle East, the whole of the South had been taken over by the North. If the sun never set on the British Empire, it no longer rose on many societies of the South.

Cultural imperialism was less dramatic than armed invasion, but, in the hands of the Chinese, the Russians, the British, and the French, it was even more invasive. The British used English to transform the Indians and Egyptians into usable copies of themselves; the French blocked the Algerians' access to their native languages, Arabic and Berber, and encouraged them to "evolve" into Francophones; the Russians recast the Turkish languages of the Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Crimea to render them mutually unintelligible; the Chinese undertook programs to convert the Uyghurs of the Tarim Basin into Chinese.

Resources also played a major role in the establishment of the South. The exploitation began with sugar in the fifteenth century and soon spread to cotton. Oil drove imperialism in the twentieth century, but it was not the only aim of imperialist exploitation. It was tin and rubber that drove imperial politics in Malaysia; spices and palm oil that the Dutch sought in Indonesia; the quest for agricultural land that captivated the Italian Fascists in Libya and the French colonists in Algeria; manpower for their armies and taxes for their treasury that

the British sought in India. Africa and Asia became the shopping mall, the bank, and the recruitment office for Europe. Finally, the impulse came full circle when Europe itself made living in Europe impossible for Jews; it was the demand for living space that drew the Zionists into Palestine and made the Jewish state an outpost of the North.

CHAPTER 45

What the South Did to Itself

Imperialism might never have been feasible, and certainly would have been slower to take hold, had many people of the South not joined its armies. The Spanish and the Portuguese set the style. Hernán Cortés conquered Mexico with Spanish steel and Mexican troops, and Vasco da Gama dominated the Indian Ocean with Portuguese artillery and native troops. The British followed their lead. In India, the prime example, the British were able to enlist natives in what at times was the world's fourth-largest army. Commanded by British officers, that army conquered state after state as it marched across the Indian subcontinent and into Central Asia. The British kept some English formations in India as a safety measure, but until the 1857 "mutiny," there were more than five Indians serving the British for each European. Suppression of the mutiny was devastating, but revolts continued. Indians tried to "mutiny" more than a dozen times after 1857 but were fairly easily suppressed. At each rumble of discontent, the British lashed out. Indeed, they often perceived native discontent before any manifestation of it and cracked down before the would-be rebels had decided what to do. And, being divided by religions, ethnic groups, and castes, any given group was always too small to defend itself or to accomplish its aims.

In Africa and Asia—as in Europe before the coming of nation-states—it was always cheaper and nearly always possible to enlist natives in the service of imperialism. Even neighbors were separated by language, custom, tribe, and religion, and they were often willing, even eager, to cooperate with the invading Europeans against neighbors whom they considered foreigners. The British accepted them readily. So did all the other imperialists. In Morocco, the French used *sipahis* (the origin of the word *sepoy*), while the Spaniards used the Fuerzas Regulares Indígenes. In Indonesia, the Dutch fought the Aceh War in Sumatra with Javanese *marechaussée* troops and then fought the Javanese with "Black Dutchmen" from the Gold Coast. The

Chinese fought the Central Asian Muslims with Chinese Muslims (Huihui) from Kansu province, and the French ruled Syria with fifty thousand of their own troops and some fourteen thousand Druze, Maronite, and Alawi soldiers. In Iraq, the British would train, equip, and command "Assyrian" Christians as "Levies." The Russians did not need to use natives (Turks) in Central Asia or the Caucasus because they had an almost unlimited supply of newly liberated serfs. But, overall, there were always ethnic and religious peoples ready to serve as soldiers. They were cheaper than Europeans, and if they were killed, no one in Europe usually even knew.

Sometimes, but rarely successfully, natives revolted. A thousand-man Congolese military force that was sent in 1897 to conquer Sudan revolted and killed its Belgian officers. It then tried to organize a "national" uprising but found there was no coherent nation to organize. In our times, Boko Haram emerged in Nigeria in response to a "postcolonial" state, which they found worse than their former imperial masters, and in distant memory of their native state, the Kano. Between the state army and police and the rebel movement, it is a toss-up as to which was the more vicious. Nigerians have suffered horribly from both.

I have described many attempts at defense against imperialists and have pointed to the cost in morality, civic order, and decency incurred by native leaders and followers during these struggles. A certain resignation to postcolonial malaise is evident, but why the struggle failed to produce the promised benefits of independence is still vigorously debated. There was disillusionment even before independence. Why had it taken so long? Was tribalism the fatal flaw? Evidently, neighbors hated neighbors more than they hated foreigners. Was Islam not strong enough to prevent cooperation with the foreigner invader? Could Islam create a sense of solidarity among the natives? How could it organize itself to do so? Each society had to try to answer these questions in its own way. Often the failure was glaring. In the Franco-Algerian war, the French were able to enlist a native Muslim force known as the Harkis to support them against the nationalists. It was ten or twenty times larger than the guerrilla force fighting for independence. The lure of money in wretchedly poor societies could rarely be resisted. Fancy uniforms and display were used to instill pride and assuage the humiliation of subordinate status. Ambitious local men would rush to front for foreign rulers. All the independence movements created clones of the imperial rulers. One of their critics indeed referred to them as "tails" (*adhyal*). Many of them became even more tyrannical than their imperial masters, the "trunks."

Nationalists and fundamentalists were both baffled by the situation

in which they found themselves. Both had thought they had the answers. Events proved that they did not. In fact, they fought among themselves, weakening the causes for which they stood. Little by little some came to understand that what they were missing was an institutional structure. That was what Hassan al-Banna tried to create in the Muslim Brotherhood and Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini created in the Shiah theocracy he fashioned in Iran. Both came at terrible costs to their fellow citizens and even to their followers. Elsewhere, in Pakistan, Algeria, and Nigeria, the only functioning institution of statehood was the army. It alone had mobility, the capacity to project force, and a functioning hierarchy. Weighed in its scale, constitutions, political parties, the judiciary, and the media were slender reeds that were unable to support liberal, humane, and secure civic life.

And almost everywhere the military asserted its power. Generals who had been soldiers of the imperialists had learned that it was the Maxim machine gun that really counted. And, as they replaced their foreigner masters, they applied that lesson. Little stood in their way in their own societies, and, for their own reasons, Americans, Russians, Chinese, British, French, and Germans rushed to give them the newer and more lethal replacements of the Maxim machine gun. The regimes of the South became the marketplace for the military-industrial complex of the North. Each supplier and each purchaser sought to outdo its competitors. Arms races were easier to promote, more popular, and more strategically justified than education, health, or social welfare. They were the snare and the illusion for both North and South.

Perhaps even more important than Northern military superiority or the quest for military superiority among rivals in the South was the effect of memory among the peoples of the South. Fundamentalists told their followers that they need not “reform” to defend themselves. They just had to remember and implement the guidance in the Quran. Like Christian Scientists, they believed that there was no sickness, no weakness—these were imaginary. God’s way, by definition, was perfect. All that was necessary was “right thinking.” Thus, they lost the balance that was captured in the phrase *din wa dunya* (affairs of religion and affairs of the world). Those who did not understand what to do about dunya turned exclusively to din. This had two effects that have deeply harmed the peoples of the Muslim world.

The first and more obvious is the sense of rigidity that has provided the basis and the justification for violence. Thus the Muslim world today is in the grip of a mind-set similar to that of the great wars of religion in Europe. If what one person passionately believes is right, then those who do not share that belief are not only wrong; they are sinful. Christian Protestants, Catholics, and particularly Puritans

thought that way in the West until recently, and on some issues many still do; Muslim fundamentalists have inherited and proclaim today a system that prevails in virtually every sphere of life, from dress, diet, and deportment to politics, crime and punishment, and warfare. The sin of the closed mind, to be found in the true believer, has killed millions.

On a less grand but practically more important issue, Muslims have suffered from the narrow-mindedness of their own leaders. Already in the nineteenth century many thinkers among the Arabs, Turks, Iranians, Indians, Malays, and others recognized this and tried to break into the minds of their fellow citizens. But their own religious establishment was against them. It often forbade or dissuaded the natives from developing even the attributes they needed to defend themselves. True, some made exceptions. The Sudanese under the Mahdi in the late nineteenth century did use the telegraph and the steamboats they copied from the British to fight the British, but they did not adopt modern, that is, European, ideas, and, despite their use of the terms, they often did not dig deeply into the reasons for their failure and the success of the imperialists. Sometimes, the answers they espoused were pathetic: if they dressed their soldiers in European uniforms, they would achieve power. If they put aside the turban and wore the fez, they would become modern (until a later generation, like that led by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, also found the fez backward and replaced it with the fedora). On a more profound level, in their attempt to copy the ways of the North, Muslim peoples mistook the results for the causes: generations of young people were more apt to enjoy the fruits of industry or agriculture than to learn how to make things or to increase production. In many countries of the Muslim world, productive labor is done by imported foreigners. In Egypt, it took a revolution to begin to create a core of what I have called New Men to adopt modern methods. It is perhaps instructive that President Gamal Abdel Nasser actually copied the Israeli kibbutz formula when he established mixed agricultural-industrial settlement, in “Liberation Province,” to raise a new kind of Egyptian.

The demand for a new way of life to be led by a new kind of Muslim has been shared for over a century. Central Asians used the word *jadid* (new) to capture what they thought they needed. Others meant much the same by the term *salafiyah*—they thought they had to achieve agreement on a firm base before they could move toward the future. And even the most violent of the mujahidin mix their religious message with “objective,” or Western, ideas on organization, science, and education.

The second effect of the confusion of din wa dunya becomes evident in a variety of activities. One way is conservation versus

innovation. We see it in the retreat of women from social participation. Much of that retreat, of course, is enforced, but a surprising amount is not. In the 1960s and 1970s Egyptian university students began to return to conservative dress. When I asked a number of young women I knew why, many answered that they felt somehow more secure. Half a century earlier, Atatürk in Turkey and Reza in Iran found that they had to pass laws or issue edicts to force women to leave aside the veil. Innovation can be frightening to those doing it.

More fundamental is the nature of education. As it spread beyond the tiny upper class in most settled societies, it was, of course, affected by existing social values. The relatively poor wanted the enhanced social status education could give. Many examples come to mind, but one I watched was simple and clear. A traditional carpenter, really an artist working in wood, whom I knew intimately over nearly fifty years had a son for whom he scraped and saved to put through university. The son refused to follow his father's métier; in his eyes it was backward and he had been educated beyond it. Unfortunately, he had not been educated *into* any useful new field. Like tens of thousands of Egyptian students, he had been *educated out.* For all his faults, President Nasser understood that problem. He hit on a way to address it. He used the army as a school. He drafted young villagers into the army, had them taught things they could never have learned in their villages, and pushed them into vocational training or into industry. It was not a satisfactory procedure, but in the Egypt of the time it was the best that he could devise.

One aspect of education that is perhaps difficult for outsiders to understand is its relationship to health. As mentioned in Chapter 29 with reference to the peasants of the Nile, all through Africa and Asia, tens of millions of people are weakened by schistosomiasis, a river-borne worm disease, which they cannot resist; it still debilitates hundreds of millions. The peasants who wade in the Nile, the Euphrates, the Indus, or the Ganges to tend their crops can do so when they do not know about disease; when they learn what wading in the water does, they are apt to give up farming. Thus education has the profoundly upsetting result we see in the explosive growth of Lagos, Cairo, Karachi, and Dacca.

Another aspect of social health has also been affected by education and the aspiration for a new, richer, and freer life. As the village was replaced by the city, the internal mechanisms that restrained strife weakened. They have not as yet been replaced in most society of the Muslim world. Neighborhoods and even families have been shattered. The fittest individual was often the survivor. Rulers could nearly always be bought. This is not new but was coincident with imperialism. The first battle the British fought in India for control of

Bengal was described as a financial transaction. As the British commander said, if the Indian troops had just thrown rocks, they could have overwhelmed the British army, but they were bribed to stand aloof. Others sold their birthrights or their countries without a struggle. The British won over tribal leaders in Iraq by "promoting" them to positions of dominance over their fellow tribesmen, enriching the "chiefs," and allowing them to use the state as their enforcer. Selective realignment of social and economic structures removed old forms of restraint and unleashed new forces. Corruption was the grease that eased the gears of imperialism. It has retained its value in the post-imperial period and is today the social disease of Africa and Asia.

There was probably no way that the Muslim peoples of Africa and Asia could have stopped the deluge of Western goods, but everywhere they eagerly threw aside traditional tastes and customs and rushed to wrap themselves in imported dress. By doing so, they helped the British to bankrupt such industry as they had. When some new forms of industry were adopted, as in the extraction of Malaysian tin and rubber, the natives often did not participate but instead relied on foreigners to activate them. In the one major attempt at industrialism in the nineteenth century, under Mehmet Ali, Europeans forced the Egyptian ruler to open Egypt to overwhelming foreign competition before it could coalesce into a form that could compete with their industry. If this was predatory capitalism, even more egregious was the "invasion" of European finance. Iran, the Ottoman Empire, and Egypt were caught in the toils of schemes for ventures they did not need and at costs they could not afford.

More formative and more enduring than all of these failures, the societies of the Muslim world failed to create balancing institutions in the face of imperialism. The Iranians were the first to recognize the need for this development. As I have mentioned, the first name for their venture into parliamentary government, *edalatkhaneh,* meant a "house of balances" where the people could balance the power of the shah. When the parliament finally began to function, at the end of the Second World War, it was overthrown by a CIA-organized coup, which forced out the first freely elected Iranian government, put Muhammad Reza Shah back in power, and made him a satrap of America. Feeling secure in that position and enriched by Iranian oil, the shah regarded "balance" as subversion. It was his failure to understand the need for participation that caused the 1979 revolution.

In summary, for a variety of shared reasons, most of the Muslim nations have failed to create the civic institutions that would make possible the transition to peace and security. For their failure and for the contribution of imperialism to that failure, the societies of the

Muslim world—and we—are today paying a fearful price. Muslim radicals today are contributing to it by striking out vigorously and often viciously against what they believe has caused it.

CHAPTER 46

Where We Are Now and Where We Can Go

The question of where we are now can be answered simply: both North and South feel insecure. Violence has become the norm. The tragic fate of the refugees pouring out of Africa and West Asia, in large part the result of the breakdown of civic order, is daily recounted in the media. This breakdown had several causes, but two overshadow the rest.

The first cause of the danger and insecurity we feel today is the long history of imperialism. A century or more of invasion, occupation, humiliation, and genocide has left scars that are still not healed, and cannot heal if they are constantly reopened.

These scars were, in fact, reopened by the American invasions of Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, and Somalia, which literally tore those societies apart. What we call "regime change" was far more fundamental than that term implies. It destroyed civic institutions, canceled the social contract that bound the citizens to one another and to government, and created precisely the anarchy that Thomas Hobbes warned was the worst of all human conditions: "no Society and which is worst of all, continuall feare, and danger of violent death. And the life of man, solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short."

Of course, the regimes the George W. Bush administration changed were far from perfect. But, as we have learned and as the affected people have now seen for themselves, almost any regime is better than none. Evolution, however uncertain, into something better through the growth of education, improved health, and rising living standards was stopped. Life itself was halted for untold tens of thousands. And no benefit accrued to anyone but warlords.

The disruptive, cruel, and violent forces now so evident in the Muslim world are at least in part a reaction to Western action. Terrorism is the weapon of the weak because it has always been the easiest weapon to grasp. Sometimes it is the only one they can grasp. We Americans used it in our revolution, as did the French and the

Russians in theirs, and as indigenous peoples have done the world over. Terrorism is not just something "they"—whoever "they" are in any era—did. It is something we all have done. And until meaningful movement is made toward solutions, it is something everyone will continue to do.

The second cause of the present danger, the Israeli expulsion of the Palestinians from their homeland, was a direct outcome of European anti-Semitism, which set in motion the events that led to the "Palestine problem." The European holocaust had many of the same effects as imperialism. Both led to the misery of innocent people and the rise of danger and violence in our times. A million Palestinians who were driven from their homeland paid the final price for what the North did to the Jews.

The peoples of the North now also face insecurity and occasional danger as well. To date, it is far smaller than the danger felt by people of the South, but it is growing and spreading. Western economies are far more vulnerable than those of the South: the dramatic attack on the World Trade Center in New York probably cost the al-Qaida movement around $100,000, certainly less than $250,000, and the lives of a dozen or so "martyrs." The damage done to America, all things considered, must have amounted to upwards of $1 trillion and several thousand lives. By that measure, it may have been the most successful attack in history. It is unlikely that others will not attempt to duplicate it.

The money costs of terrorism are obviously important, but they are less important than the political and psychological costs of the actions used to suppress it and defend against it. These have wounded our sense of civic order, our respect for our legal institutions, and our trust in one another. Pushed further, they will split our world even more deeply between North and South—indeed, between our domestic North and South.

We are at a fork in the road—or perhaps we are already past it, having chosen the specious security of power. Military people favor this choice because they have been trained to follow its markers; politicians like it because they can "stand tall" and wrap themselves in the flag; arms merchants like it because it justifies and enriches their businesses; labor unions like it because it offers "quality" jobs. Why think of any other choice?

The simple answers are two. First, the military-security road does not take us where we want to go. It does not lead us toward affordable world security but rather toward unaffordable world insecurity. The further down that road we go, the further we get from a livable world.

The second answer is that military-based security actions and policies have been costly failures. Counterinsurgency has been applied

in Afghanistan for sixteen years, at a monetary cost, in today's dollars, larger than the entire Marshall Plan that rebuilt Europe at the end of the Second World War. The result has been the virtual destruction of Afghanistan, terrible misery for its people, and the creation of a corrupt oligarchy that will flee when the money stops rolling in. The one thing the policy has not done is create peace or stability, and there is no prospect of its doing so. The Iraqi venture has been, if anything, worse. A direct outcome of our campaign there has been the formation of the Islamic State. Applied further, as we are now doing, the road of counterinsurgency leads to unending war.

The other road is unmapped and offers no quick fix. It is far less dramatic. It is uncertain. At best it will be bumpy. Even to begin to think through what that road would involve will require statesmanship of a kind that is always in short supply and now does not appear to exist. It will require commitments that depend on knowledge and sophistication that are not now evident. As an old policy planner, I have thought long and hard about the two roads. Among the things that are necessary is a clear view of how we got to where we are. The beginning of wisdom, I suggest, must be sought where the Brahmins in the parable stopped. We must understand tails and trunks in order to begin to see the elephant, much less deal with it. Getting that perspective has been my goal in writing this book. Perhaps it will form at least a starting point.

Notes

CHAPTER 1: THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL BASES OF ISLAM

1. As President Nasser remarked to me after dealing with the Algerians.
2. Thomas Macaulay, "Minute on Indian Education," paper presented to Parliament in February 1835. The text is reproduced in many places. Indians read it in the vast collection of volumes edited by R. C. Majumdar, *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* of which vol. 10, pt. 2 is devoted to British paramountcy (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965). Chapter 2 deals with the system of education imposed on India by the English. See p. 34 ff. for the "Aims and Objects of English Education" and 46 ff. on Macaulay and his program. It is notable that Macaulay made no effort to understand any Indian language.
3. The 1952 conference was sponsored by the Rockefeller Foundation, of which I was then a fellow. I acted as secretary. I later learned that one could not repair an automobile except with reference to the imperial power that had dominated the place where it broke down. There was no common word for "clutch." The English-educated used "clutch," the French-educated used *embrayage,* the Italian-educated used *indentatura,* and in common parlance there were various other words.
4. The Tatars and Chechens were not only "denationalized" but also rounded up and deported and so "deterritorialized." The tsars drove out over a million Chechens in the nineteenth century, and in the 1940s Stalin adapted a program the Nazis had planned but had not had time to implement. He arranged that nearly a quarter of a million Tatars, mainly women and children and the aged, be loaded in unprotected cattle cars and shipped to Central Asia. Large numbers died on the way, and the survivors were hustled into forced labor camps. The survivors were allowed to return after Stalin's death, but most found their houses and farms occupied by Russians.

CHAPTER 2: MUHAMMAD THE MESSENGER AND HIS MESSAGE

1. All the dates I mention henceforth, unless otherwise noted, are in the Common Era (CE).
2. My translation of Quran 4/163. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are from the standard English translation, although in rather stilted English, by Marmaduke Pickthall, *The Meaning of the Glorious Koran* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1930 ff.).
3. The Quran not only lists the biblical prophets but also recounts myths and

legends that must have been traditional in Arabia, such as those of the people of Aad and their prophet Hud, the people of Thamud and their prophet Salih, and the people of Midian (who are also mentioned in Genesis) and their prophet Shuyub. Quran 7/65 ff.

4. Sura 2/144: "We [God] have seen you turn your face toward the sky in supplication so [now] turn your prayers toward a sanctuary that pleases you and pray [plural, i.e., the Muslims] toward it."
5. Sura 24/3. The two verses that follow specify that if they are falsely accused or the charge against them is not proven, the accuser is to be whipped unless he or she "repent[s] and make[s] amends [since] God is forgiving, merciful."
6. Leviticus 20:10, 25:14, 25:16, 25:23; Deuteronomy 22:13–21, 22:23–24. Burning to death is also specified for some crimes.
7. Leviticus 25:18: "You shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them."
8. As Robert Roberts has written in *The Social Laws of the Qoran* (London: William and Norgate, 1925), "In fairness to Muhammed it must be said that he limited rather than introduced the practice among the Arabs . . . polygamy was the rule among Eastern peoples before Muhammed's times. . . . [And] in the Old Testament he would find many examples of polygamy . . . without any express reprehension of a higher power" (8).
9. M. W. Mirza, "Muslim Religion and Society," in *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* ed. R. C. Majumdar, vol. 6, *The Delhi Sultanate,* 2nd ed. (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1967), 608–609.
10. muSLiM is on the pattern of muGHiQ in the Arabic teacher's joke I detailed earlier.

CHAPTER 3: THE CALIPHATE AND THE CONQUESTS

1. I will discuss the caliphate more fully in Part 5, where I deal with its "reassertion" by the Islamic State (ISIS).
2. Members of the Islamic State today pick up this theme and regard their success against all odds as proof of God's approval and the rightness of their cause.
3. A new discovery may force a reconsideration of this traditional account. A partial text of three chapters (*suras*) was found in 2016 at the library of the University of Birmingham that has been dated to the lifetime of the Prophet.
4. These commentaries or glosses not only preserved the variant reading but also dealt with the growth of the language and beliefs. Practically every aspiring Muslim scholar tried his hand at them. The most famous in the modern world was written by the Egyptian "philosopher" of radical Islam Sayyid Qutb while he was in prison.
5. Th. W. Juynboll, "Hadith," in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam,* ed. H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), 116.
6. A prime example is Jakarta. Today the largest Islamic city, with a population of over thirty million, it began as a small village and then became the Dutch capital of their Javan empire, Batavia.

CHAPTER 4: THE GREAT DAYS OF THE CALIPHATES AND THE EVOLUTION OF ISLAM

1. Germanic tribesmen, the Vandals or, as they called themselves, the Wends, had rampaged through Western Europe and established themselves at Carthage in what is now Tunisia. From that base, they raided and partly destroyed the city of Rome in 455. Everywhere they went, they gave their name to wanton destruction.
2. For particular emphasis on the Muslim communities, see L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), and L. P. Harvey, *Muslims in Spain, 1500 to 1614* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005). A delightful illustrated account of al-Andalus is Titus Burchardt's *Muslim Culture in Spain* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972).
3. By fortune, a part of the records of the Cairo Jewish community, the Geniza, have survived. The community had made no attempt to build an archive but, because the authors believed it to be impious to destroy documents on which the word "God" was written, hundreds of thousands of sheets of paper, cloth, papyrus, and vellum were thrown into a sort of silo (the word *geniza* means "hiding place") where the dry climate of Egypt preserved them. When they were rediscovered in the nineteenth century, they were partly scattered among collectors, but enough have been recovered to enable D. S. Goitein to write a remarkable series of volumes under the title *A Mediterranean Society,* published from 1967 by the University of California Press. They illustrate the life of the community, its commerce, and its relationship to the dominant Muslim government.
4. This pattern of autonomous "nationhood" (Turkish: *millet*) grew out of the pagan Arab tribal custom of granting hospitality to a "protected stranger" (Arabic: *jar*).
5. The seventeenth-century wars of religion, the Thirty Years' War, were among the most brutal experienced in Europe, but they were unique only in scale. Smaller but no less brutal were the suppressions of deviants such as the Crusade against the Cathars in France, the Inquisition in Portugal and Spain, and numbers of lesser-known conflicts throughout the medieval and early modern periods.
6. Judaism, as we know from the Old Testament, began as the religion of the Hebrew people; it authorized them to seize the land of Palestine and offered no means for non-Jews to achieve safety comparable to the status of a protected community in Islam. Its God, Yahweh, authorized the massacre of all who stood in the way of the Jewish nation. An impartial reader would see the Old Testament as partly a battle cry. It was the Roman Empire that pacified the Jewish nation. Breaking out of the narrow confines of their new land and their militant religion, Jews became among the most civilized and cosmopolitan communities of the Roman Empire. They drew back from militarism, and although they continued to convert distant peoples in Africa, Asia, and Europe, they became politically passive. It was against this tradition of passivity that modern Zionists revolted and returned Judaism to "muscular" nationalism.
7. As Eamon Duffy has written in "The First Blood Libel against the Jews," review of *The Murder of William of Norwich: The Origins of the Blood Libel in Medieval Europe,* by E. M. Rose, *New York Review of Books,* October 27, 2016, "From the mid-twelfth century onward urban communities scattered across Europe persuaded themselves that each year about Eastertime the Jewish minorities living among them conspired in the systematic abduction and ritual slaughter of Christian children. That myth would be used to justify centuries of harassment, robbery, and judicial murder of European Jews.

Jews, it was claimed, believed that their ultimate return to the Holy Land depended on the spilling of innocent Christian blood." He continues, "Wherever the myth was credited, synagogues and Torah scrolls might be burned, Jews imprisoned, forcibly converted, exiled, driven to suicide, tortured, or killed, and their property confiscated."

8. Not to press the analogy too far, but we can say that what he was doing was, in the context of his times, comparable to the way justices on the Supreme Court read the records of the men who wrote the American Constitution to understand better their aims. For Hanbal, that was the end of the process, whereas American Supreme Court justices believe in arguing by analogy and most believe in adapting to changing circumstances and community mores.
9. The decline of *Asabiyah,* the force that bound primitive society together and gave it power, is the central theme of the great Arab historian Ibn Khaldun.
10. *"Khalifatun baina Wasif wa Bugha / yaqulu ma qala lahu kama taqulu al-babaga."*
11. This process is brilliantly described by Speros Vryonis Jr. in *The Decline of Medieval Hellenism in Asia Minor and the Process of Islamization from the Eleventh through the Fifteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971).
12. Since the Seljuqs are relatively little known, I draw the reader's attention to the beautiful exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum of Art catalogued by Sheila R. Canby et al., *Splendor of the Seljuqs* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).
13. Norman Golb, "New Light on the Persecution of French Jews at the Time of the First Crusade," *Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research* 34 (1966): 1–63.
14. A spirited account of these events was provided by Steven Runciman in *A History of the Crusades* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1951). There is now a vast collection of studies on the topic.
15. Attitudes of the local Muslims toward the crusaders can be gleaned from H. A. R. Gibb, *The Damascus Chronicle of the Crusades* (London: Luzac, 1932), and Francesco Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).
16. Claude Cahen, *Pre-Ottoman Turks* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1968), 45. Among the books dealing with the assassins, the best is Marshall Hodgson's *The Order of Assassins* (The Hague: Mouton, 1955). Also see Farhad Daftary, *The Assassin Legends* (London: Tauris, 1994), and Bernard Lewis, *The Assassins* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967).
17. A provocative adaptation of trauma analysis to the events of the time in Iran is given by Abbas Edalat in "Trauma Hypothesis: The Enduring Legacy of the Mongol Catastrophe on the Political, Social and Scientific History of Iran," Algorithmic Human Development, Department of Computing, Imperial College London, 2011, http://humandevelopment.doc.ic.ac.uk, a translation of an article in Farsi in the journal *Bukhara* 13, nos. 77–78 (September–December 2010): 227–263.
18. I discuss the writing of strategists in my *Neighbors and Strangers: The Fundamentals of Foreign Affairs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997). Until at least the middle of the twentieth century, rulers thought of what we call states as dynasties (*dawlahs*). This was also true of European rulers until roughly the time of the French Revolution or in some cases even much later.

19. This is perhaps not quite so exotic as it seems. The use of men of "the household" of the ruler to carry out the tasks of the state is shown in titles drawn from domestic service: in England, for example, we encounter the "keeper of the royal wardrobe," and, in the first Turkish dynasty in India, the "lord of the robe" (*amir al-hajib*). They were the ruler's closest attendants.
20. A. B. M. Habibullah, as quoted in K. A. Nizami, "Foundations of the Delhi Sultanat [*sic*]," in *A Comprehensive History of India,* ed. Mohammad Habib and Khaliq Ahmad Nizami, vol. 5, *The Delhi Sultanate* (Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1970), 139–140.
21. A delightful account in this trade in "exotics" is given by Edward Schafer in *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963) and *Shore of Pearls* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969).
22. Ahmad bin Yahya al-Buladhuri, *Futuh al-Buldan* [The conquest of nations], translated by H. M. Elliot as *The History of India as Told by Its Own Historians: The Muhammadan Period* (Delhi: D. K., 2001, a facsimile reproduction of the 1867 ed.), 1:116.
23. Similarly, the Taliban destroyed Buddhist monuments in Afghanistan and the Islamic State destroyed the ruins of Palmyra. This was comparable to the defacement of Egyptian and classical Greek sculptures by the early Christians in Egypt and Syria. The most striking act of destruction occurred in the town of Somnath, where an invading Muslim Turkish force from Afghanistan hacked into an iron lingam that was suspended in a temple and found it to be filled with offerings of gold and jewels from Hindu worshippers. Perhaps encouraged by what he found, Mahmud is said to have gone on to destroy thousands of Hindu temples whose worshippers "watched helplessly as friends and family were slain or enslaved by invaders who claimed to kill, rape, and rob in the name of God." Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 107.
24. Timur "the Lame," known in Persian as Timur-i Lang and in eastern Turkish as Aksak Timur.
25. Zahir al-Din Muhammad Babur, *Memoirs* [Babur-Nama], trans. from Turkic by Annette Beveridge (Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1990).
26. Thomas Roe, *The Embassy of Sir Thomas Roe to India 1615–19,* ed. W. Foster (London: Hakluyt Society, 1899; repr., Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1926).
27. Readers of the recent writings of the Turkish Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk, particularly *My Name Is Red* and *Istanbul: Memories and the City,* can get a better sense of the city than in standard histories.
28. Richard Knolles, *Historie of the Turkes* (London, 1603).
29. France under King Francis I sought Ottoman support against fellow Catholic Spain in 1536, and half a century later Queen Elizabeth was willing to supply the Ottomans with materials to make weapons and ammunition. The lead for shot came from the roofs of confiscated churches and the brass for cannon came from melted-down church bells.

CHAPTER 5: THE NORTH MOVES SOUTH

1. These numbers are largely informed guesses because that is all we have.
2. It would be extended even further and to other parts of society in the eighteenth century when in 1784 Benjamin Franklin invented the bifocal lens.

3. P. J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India 1740–1828,* The New Cambridge History of India, vol. 2, no. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 16.
4. Quoted in Eric Roll, *A History of Economic Thought* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1942), 61.
5. Quoted in Stephen R. Bown, *Merchant Kings: When Companies Ruled the World, 1600–1900* (New York: St. Martin's, 2009), 143. Clive went on to compliment himself on his moderation: "When I think of the marvelous riches of that country, and the comparatively small part which I took away, I am astonished at my own moderation." Quoted in Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India* (London: Hurst, 2017), 10.
6. For an illustrated account of their return to England and the palaces they built, see Michael Edwardes, *The Nabobs at Home* (London: Constable, 1951).
7. Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 181.
8. I am grateful to the Indian journalist and parliamentarian Shashi Tharoor for this little-known work by Durant. See Tharoor's powerfully argued *Inglorious Empire,* 1.
9. Clause 34, India Act of 1784.
10. R. C. Majumdar, "The British Paramountcy and Imperialism," in *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* ed. R. C. Majumdar, vol. 9 (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963), pt. 1, 4.
11. Wilfrid Blunt, *Desert Hawk: Abdel Kader and the French Conquest of Algeria* (London: Methuen, 1947), 15–16.
12. M. N. Pearson, *The Portuguese in India,* The New Cambridge History of India (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 32–33.
13. These are the words of Luis de Camös in the Portuguese national epic. Vasco da Gama "persistently mistook Hinduism for some sort of deviant Christianity." Pearson, *Portuguese in India,* 13. Some aspects of Indian society would have seemed familiar to da Gama. In his native Portugal, girls often married at twelve, and adult women were often veiled. What is known of him, however, indicates a violent and bitter hatred of Muslims.
14. Wolpert, *New History of India,* 136.
15. John Maynard Keynes, *A Treatise on Money*, 2:1156–1157, quoted in Karl de Schweinitz, *The Rise and Fall of British India* (London: Routledge, 1983), 43.
16. Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire,* 150–157.
17. William R. Polk, *The Opening of South Lebanon, 1788–1840* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), xx.
18. Quoted in Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire,* 16.
19. Moustafa Fahmy, *La Révolution de l'industrie en Egypte et ses conséquences sociales au 19e siècle, 1800–1850* (Leiden: Brill, 1954). I will deal more fully with Egypt's attempt to modernize in Chapter 6.
20. On the Congo, see Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1997). A summary was published in Andrew Osborn, "Belgium Confronts Its Colonial Demons," *Guardian,* July 18, 2002. Osborn points out that the scale of massacre was at least double that of the Holocaust, yet Belgium has made neither apology nor restitution.
21. Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire,* 149–150.
22. Sporadically, without coherence or coordination, and often without leadership, wars of resistance or rebellion were fought in Indonesia (1825,

1871, 1888, 1927), the Caucasus (1817–1864), Bukhara (1866–1868), Khiva (1839, 1873), Algeria (1830–1847), Afghanistan (1839–1842, 1879, 1919), India (1857), Egypt (1879–1882, 1919), Sudan (1881–1899), the Rif (1911), Libya (1911–1939), Iraq (1919), Syria (1920, 1925–1927), and Palestine (1936–1939).

23. Stephen Kinzer, *The True Flag: Theodore Roosevelt, Mark Twain, and the Birth of American Empire* (New York: Holt, 2017), 150–157.
24. As Graham Fuller has pointed out, "there are a dozen good reasons why there is bad blood between the West and the Middle East today, without any reference to Islam or to religion." Graham E. Fuller, "Yes, It Is Islamic Extremism—but Why?," blog entry, February 22, 2015, http://grahamefuller.com/yes-it-is-Islamic-extremism-but-why/.
25. Salafiyah is a complex doctrine and has been generally misunderstood. It is roughly comparable to the Puritan movement in Protestant Christianity. That is, it sought to gain strength and purity, and so to advance, by returning to the "pure" religion at its origin. I will discuss this in Part 5, where I deal with Sayyid Qutb's fundamentalism and Abu Bakr Naji's jihadism.

PART 2: THE RESPONSES OF TRADITIONAL MUSLIM SOCIETIES

1. When the English term does not have the exact meaning of the original, I will give the Arabic, Turkish, or Farsi name in parentheses after the English term. I do this for two reasons: first, social anthropologists have convinced me that if an institution or practice does not have a name in the native language, it may be just a projection of the observer; and second, the overlap between a native institution and a foreign institution is not always exact, so the reader should be told in an identifiable way what is being discussed.

CHAPTER 6: SULTAN SELIM III, NAPOLEON, AND MEHMET ALI

1. In modern Turkish, the Ottoman Turkish, Arabic, and Persian letter pronounced "jim" is represented by the Latin letter *C*.
2. His secretary, Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne, commented that Cleopatra would not have recognized the Alexandria they saw.
3. Napoleon's statement was obviously read by Egyptians because it is given in Arabic by the Egyptian chronicler of Napoleon's rule, Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti, in *Tarikh muddat al-Faransis bi Misr,* translated by Shmuel Moreh as *Napoleon in Egypt: Al-Jabarti's Chronicle of the First Seven Months of the French Occupation of Egypt, 1798* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1993), 24–26. In his introduction to the translation, Robert Tignor comments that it "is one of the finest chronicles of a European encounter with a non-European people as told from the vantage point of the non-European" (14).
4. Al-Jabarti, *Napoleon in Egypt,* 26.
5. Ibid., 54.
6. Ibid., 27.
7. *Description de l'Égypte* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1809 ff.). The twenty-four volumes were published by successive French governments over the following thirty years.

8. Vivant Denon, *Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt* (London, 1803), 2:246. A quite remarkable observer, Denon is credited with encouraging the early phases of Egyptology. He was a member of l'Institut d'Égypte and served later as a director of the Louvre.
9. Ibid., 2:305–306.
10. Jean Louis Ebenezer Reynier, *State of Egypt after the Battle of Heliopolis, Translated from the French* (London, 1802), 17.
11. The contemporary Arab writer Usama ibn Munqidh gives an account of a "Frankish" doctor who killed patients with brutal force and religious hocus pocus, in contrast to the logical methods used by a local Christian doctor. In one case, a man had an abscess on his leg. The Christian doctor applied a poultice and the wound began to heal. Then the Frankish doctor said this was not the right way: he had the man's leg cut off with blows from an ax. "The marrow spurted out of the legs, and the patient died instantaneously." Francesco Gabrieli, ed., *Arab Historians of the Crusades* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 76.
12. Al-Jabarti, *Napoleon in Egypt,* 41.
13. The officer had to go but realized why he was being sent. When the Royal Navy intercepted the boat on which he was traveling, he told them the story and, with a fine sense of irony, they sent him back to Egypt.
14. Al-Jabarti, *Napoleon in Egypt,* 36.
15. *La décade égyptienne: Journal littéraire et d'économie politique* (Cairo: Imprimerie nationale, VII de la République Française, [1801]), 11–12.
16. Al-Jabarti, *Napoleon in Egypt,* 93.

CHAPTER 7: FRENCH INVASION AND ALGERIAN RESISTANCE

1. L. P. Harvey, *Islamic Spain, 1250 to 1500* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 321, 324–325.
2. William Spencer, *Algiers in the Age of the Corsairs* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1976), 88.
3. Ibid., 57.
4. Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954–1962* (London: Macmillan, 1977), 29.
5. Wilfrid Blunt, *Desert Hawk: Abdel Kader and the French Conquest of Algeria* (London: Methuen, 1947), 4. Although dated, Blunt's spirited book is perhaps the best biography of Abdel Kader in English.
6. Ibid., 11.
7. Ibid., 27.
8. Charles Callwell, *Small Wars: The Principles and Practices* (1896; repr., Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996, with a new introduction by Douglas Porch), 128.
9. Ibid. As Callwell explained (21), he did not mean by "small wars" wars that were small in scale but rather colonial wars that pitted European armies against natives, as opposed to the formal wars of mass that typically took place in Europe. The description quoted is very similar to T. E. Lawrence's description of the Arab tactics in the revolt against the Ottoman Empire in his article on guerrilla warfare in the 1925 *Encyclopædia Britannica.*
10. Callwell, *Small Wars,* 128–129.
11. Blunt, *Desert Hawk,* 169–170.

12. Ibid., 216 ff.
13. Horne, *Savage War of Peace,* 30.
14. "Lalla Fatma N'Soumer: A Symbol of Feminine Strength," Algeria.com, accessed April 14, 2017, http://www.algeria.com/blog/lalla-fatma-nsoumer-a-symbol-of-feminine-strength. Also see Aziz Sadki, "Bou Baghiu n'a pas épousé Lalla Fathma," *Histoire de l'Algerie* (blog), August 26, 2012, http://histoiredelalgerie.over-blog.com/article-bou-baghla-n-a-pas-epouse-lalla-fathma-et-cheikh-el-haddad-n-est-pas-marabout-109446238.html, citing Pierre Vallaud, *La Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris: Acropole, 2005).
15. Quoted in Horne's excellent account of Algeria, *Savage War of Peace,* 29. Tocqueville is known to Americans mainly for his brilliant portrait of American society, *Democracy in America;* after his tour in America he was elected to the French National Assembly. As the member of the US Policy Planning Council responsible for the Middle East and North Africa, I was head of the American interdepartmental task force on Algeria during the last part of the war and thus had access to all the American intelligence reports (most of which were provided by the French), but I have found Horne's account both more consistent and more insightful.

CHAPTER 8: THE BRITISH CONQUEST OF INDIA AND THE SEPOY REVOLT

1. C. A. Bayly, *Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
2. P. J. Marshall, *Bengal: The British Bridgehead, Eastern India 1740–1828,* The New Cambridge History of India, vol. 2, no. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987).
3. Edward Blunt, *The ICS* (London: Faber and Faber, 1937), 9.
4. Marshall, *Bengal,* 77–78, 83.
5. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (New York: Modern Library, 1937), 602–606.
6. Percival Spear, *The Nabobs* (London: Curzon, 1963).
7. From Sir J. Malcolm's *Life of Clive,* 2:379, quoted in Stanley Wolpert, *A New History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 186.
8. Wolpert, *New History of India,* 188. The British did nothing to alleviate the suffering but made a fortune speculating on grain during the famine.
9. Edmund Burke, speech to Parliament on the impeachment of Warren Hastings, February 1788, quoted in Mia Carter and Barbara Harlow, eds., *Archives of Empire,* vol. 1, *From the East India Company to the Suez Canal* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 146.
10. The English government was the ultimate authority and was never challenged by the rulers of India, but the British soldiers and traders returned to England from India with vast wealth that they used to win seats in Parliament and to buy great estates. Their impact on England is the subject of Michael Edwardes's *The Nabobs at Home* (London: Constable, 1991).
11. Quoted in Spear, *Nabobs,* 141.
12. Nancy L. Paxton, *Writing under the Raj: Gender, Race, and Rape in the British Colonial Imagination, 1830–1947* (Piscataway, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999), 5 ff.

13. Sufism had become popular in India about the same time, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as in Kashmir, the Levant, and Central Asia, and probably for the same reasons: escape from misery and fear associated with the Turco-Mongol invasions.
14. Wolpert, *New History of India,* 133.
15. John F. Richards, *The Mughal Empire,* The New Cambridge History of India, vol. 1, no. 5 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 39–40.
16. S. Roy, "Akbar," in *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* ed. R. C. Majumdar, vol. 7, *The Mughul Empire* (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1967), 135. A more political and materialistic interpretation is Richards's *Mughal Empire,* 39–40.
17. Roy, "Akbar," 138.
18. Aziz Ahmad, *An Intellectual History of Islam in India* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1969), 8 ff.
19. Aziz Ahmad, "Approaches to History in Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century Muslim India," *Journal of World History* 9 (1966): 1000–1001.
20. In his time, the Aga Khan would be received by the monarch in London but could not enter a British club in India.
21. Spear, *Nabobs,* 142.
22. Reginald Haber, *Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824–1825* (London: 1928; repr., London: British Library, 2010), 343–344.
23. Thomas Macaulay, "Minute on Indian Education," paper presented to Parliament in February 1835, reprinted in R. C. Majumdar and K. K. Datta, "English Education," in *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance,* ed. K. M. Munshi and R. C. Majumdar, vol. 10, pt. 2 of *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* ed. R. C. Majumdar (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965), 81 ff.
24. Quoted in Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India* (London: Hurst, 2017), 16.
25. Ibid., 63.
26. The Dutch are only now admitting their slaving practices in Asia. Linawati Sidarto, "Two Centuries of Slavery on Indonesian Soil," review of Matthias van Rossum's *Kleurrijke Tragiek: De geschiedenis van slavernij in Azië onder de VOC* [Colorful tragedy: The history of slavery in Asia under the VOC (Dutch East India Company)], by Matthias van Rossum, and *Daar werd wat gruwelijks verricht: Slavernij in Nederlands-Indie* [Gruesome things were committed there: Slavery in the Dutch East Indies], by Reggie Baay, *Jakarta Post,* October 5, 2015.
27. Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire,* 164.
28. John William Kaye, *A History of the Sepoy War in India, 1857–1858* (London, 1870), 2:51–52.
29. Ibid., 2:4.
30. Eric Stokes, *The Peasant Armed: The Indian Revolt of 1857* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 82. Unlike the Indians, the American revolutionaries were saved from defeat by French troops, arms, naval forces, and money. They also could retreat beyond the reach of the British army. None of these advantages were available to the sepoys. They had no foreign supporters and the battles were almost entirely concentrated in and around Delhi.

31. In addition to Kaye, *History of the Sepoy War,* see W. H. Russell, *My Diary in India* (London, 1860), and J. W. Sherer, *Daily Life during the Indian Mutiny* (London, 1898). In *The Cambridge History of India* account of the mutiny that was regarded for half a century as authoritative, T. Rice Holmes hardly mentions the Muslim rebels' angers, fears, and objectives. He deals almost exclusively with what the British did to suppress the revolt. T. Rice Holmes, "The Mutiny," ch. 10 in *The Cambridge History of India,* ed. H. H. Dodwell, vol. 6 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1932).
32. Quoted in R. C. Majumdar, "Atrocities," in *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* ed. R. C. Majumdar, vol. 9, pt. 1 (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1963), 591 ff.
33. Wolpert, *New History of India,* 341.
34. Bernard S. Cohn, "Representing Authority in Victorian India," in *The Invention of Tradition,* ed. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 165 ff.

CHAPTER 9: CHECHEN IMAM SHAMIL RESISTS RUSSIAN IMPERIALISM

1. Richard Hakluyt, *Voyages* (London, 1589; repr., London: Everyman, 1967), 2:256 ff.
2. The name of the people was Tatar, but most European Christians called them Tartars, the inhabitants of Tartarus, or Hell.
3. Hakluyt, *Voyages,* 2:135–136.
4. So large were their "human resources" that they were able to consider supplying or renting nearly forty thousand troops to the British in 1747.
5. John F. Baddeley, *The Russian Conquest of the Caucasus* (London: Longmans Green, 1908), xxi–xxii. Baddeley was an English journalist who moved to Russia, where he had unlimited access to Russian archives and in 1908 spent nearly a year in the Caucasus. His is still the most intimately observed and vivid account of the Russian conquest. It has been reissued in a digital impression and then reprinted. Despite being a century old, it still is the most engaging available study. It has been followed by Charles King's authoritative *The Ghost of Freedom: A History of the Caucasus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008). King was able to access Chechen sources, whereas Baddeley was generally restricted to Russian accounts. I have found the two most useful when juxtaposed.
6. As we know from experience with American tribes, names are multiple and vary from what people called themselves to what outsider enemies and friends called them. "Chechen" and "Circassian" both come from Russian. "Vainakh" means, as do the names of most American Indian tribes, "the people" or "our people."
7. Baddeley, *Russian Conquest,* xxxv. King, *Ghost of Freedom,* 73 ff., describes the campaign.
8. Baddeley thought that the word came from a Turkish word meaning "vagabond" and was more or less fastened on the people by the Russians. *Russian Conquest,* xxx. But in Ottoman Turkish it meant "warlike" or "brave."
9. Baddeley, *Russian Conquest,* 250.
10. King, *Ghost of Freedom,* 69–70.
11. Baddeley, *Russian Conquest,* 237.

12. Leo Tolstoy, *Hadji Murat.* Russians were, of course, fascinated by their wars in Muslim areas. For example, see Michael Lermontov, *Sketches of Russian Life in the Caucasus.*
13. Emil Souleimanov, "Imam Shamil, Islam and the Chechens: Historical Considerations in Regional Perspective," *Rycckii Boproc,* December 15, 2015.
14. Russia would not evolve a nationalities policy for another half century, and even then, as I have pointed out, it was determined to destroy independent bases of religious power.
15. William R. Polk, *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).
16. Baddeley, *Russian Conquest,* 376–377.
17. Ibid., xxxvii–xxxviii.
18. Leo Tolstoy, *Hadji Murad,* in *The Short Novels of Tolstoy,* trans. Aylmer Maude (New York: Dial, 1946), 584–585.
19. Ibid., 479.
20. Austin Jersild, *Orientalism and Empire: North Caucasus Mount Peoples and the Georgian Frontier, 1845–1917* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 145 ff.

CHAPTER 10: BANKERS ON HORSEBACK

1. John Bowring, *Report on the Commercial Statistics of Syria* (London: William Clowes, 1840), made with the help of British consuls and businessmen in the target countries.
2. Commercial Code of 1838.
3. I have discussed his attempt to stay independent and his defeat by Britain in Chapter 6.
4. Bowring, *Commercial Statistics of Syria,* 28.
5. William Ernest Hocking, *The Spirit of World Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1932). In this book, Hocking describes the assertion that inefficient use voided rights to property and categorizes it as the essence of imperialism.
6. William R. Polk, *The Birth of America* (New York: HarperCollins, 2006), 242, drawing on John Dickinson's *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania,* printed in Forrest McDonald, ed., *Empire and Nation* (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1999), 25–26.
7. Although no longer associated with the canal, which was finally nationalized in 1958, the company is still one of the major corporations of France.
8. David Landes, *Bankers and Pashas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958), 316.
9. Ibid.
10. Bankers did the same in Chile, Argentina, Greece, China, and other countries in later years with often the same results.
11. J. Seymour Keay, *Spoiling the Egyptians: A Tale of Shame* (London: privately printed, 1882), n.p. See William R. Polk, *The Arab World Today,* 5th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 86.
12. Lord Cromer, *Modern Egypt* (London: Macmillan, 1908), 1:11. Cromer was born Evelyn Baring. He was educated at the Royal Military College but spent his military career in political work, much of it in India. Deeply conservative and a firm believer in free trade, that is, free entry for European industry, he

worked on the principle that all governments in the South were hopelessly corrupt and inefficient and that the white man's burden included ruling them for their own good. This was what he proclaimed to be his mission in Egypt.

CHAPTER 11: SUDANESE MAHDIYAH AND THE BRITISH CONQUEST

1. Peter Holt, *A Modern History of the Sudan* (New York: Grove, 1961), 21.
2. I deal with this aspect of imperialism, the destruction of attempted modernization, in Chapter 10 and more fully in *The United States and the Arab World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1965), 78–79.
3. Ismail first used Sir Samuel Baker, an English explorer, hunter, and travel writer, who tried to crush the slave trade with violence. A proud and brutal man, he infuriated the newly installed bureaucracy and the tribal leaders and failed in his mission. A romantic, he fell in love with a white slave girl and stole her away from her Armenian master, who was preparing to sell her into a harem, and made her his companion for a heroic life of hunting. He thus had a personal approach to ending slavery, but he also had a reputation for failing to draw a sharp distinction between the animals he hunted and the people he ruled.
4. In England he was engaged in social work and Christian charities with homeless boys. He was thought to have been a closet homosexual, like Horatio Herbert Kitchener and Cecil Rhodes, then a felony, but he was never charged. He made his reputation as a soldier of fortune fighting on behalf of the emperor of China (hence his title "Chinese Gordon").
5. Peter Holt's book, *The Mahdist State in the Sudan* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1958), is still the best book on the movement. Holt uses a trove of Arabic-language documents that survived war, revolution, and neglect. Much of the following information is drawn from it.
6. D. B. MacDonald, "al-Mahdi," in *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam,* ed. H. A. R. Gibb and J. H. Kramers (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), 310–311. I have simplified the spelling of Arabic words.
7. That was later the interpretation of the Inquisition. The inquisitor Bernard Gui analyzed his thought in his *Practica Inquisitionis haereticae praviatis,* reprinted as *Manuel de l'Inquisteur,* ed. and trans. G. Mollat (Paris: Société d'édition Les Belles Lettres, 1964).

CHAPTER 12: SANUSIYAH IMAM UMAR AL-MUKHTAR AGAINST ITALIAN GENOCIDE

1. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1949), 4. Evans-Pritchard served as a tribal affairs officer in the British army in Libya for two years during the Second World War. His student, Professor Emrys Peters, followed him after the war in studying the bedouin, on whom both Peters and his wife Stella wrote theses at Oxford. They were close friends of mine and I benefited both from their writings and from many days of talking about the anthropology of Libya.
2. The usual word among North Africans for sainthood is *marabut,* which comes into English through Spanish and French to be "marabout." In medieval times, it was applied to a person who went to live, pray, and prepare for jihad in a sort of military monastery, a *ribat.* The "graduates" of

such institutions formed the religious-military core, the *murabitun,* of the Sinhaja Berbers of Morocco (aka the Almoravids), who first founded the city of Marrakech as their capital and then invaded Spain in the eleventh century.

3. Evans-Pritchard, *Sanusi of Cyrenaica,* 64. As he remarks, "the Bedouin of Cyrenaica were Muslim . . . before the Grand Sanusi propagated the faith among them, because otherwise it would be difficult to account for their ready acceptance of his guidance. He was not appealing to a pagan people to embrace Islam, but to a Muslim people to show in their lives the faith they professed."
4. Cyrenaica was notable as the place where the airplane made its military debut when in November 1911 an Italian pilot dropped a hand grenade on a tribesman.
5. Rodolfo Graziani, *Cirenaica Pacificata* (Milan, 1932), quoted in Evans-Pritchard, *Sanusi of Cyrenaica,* 163. The guerrilla forces, known as the *muhafiziayah* (preservers or stalwarts), never numbered more than one thousand and were outnumbered at least twenty to one. As Evans-Pritchard pointed out, they "were drawn from every part of the Ottoman Empire—Albanians, Kurds, Syrians, Iraqis, Circassians, Anatolians, Macedonians, and Thracians" (*Sanusi of Cyrenaica,* 115).
6. John K. Cooley, *Libyan Sandstorm: The Complete Account of Qaddafi's Revolution* (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1983), 34.

CHAPTER 13: THE RIFF WAR AND ABD AL-KARIM IN MOROCCO

1. The arguments are summarized by C. R. Pennell in "Ideology and Practical Politics: A Case Study of the Rif War in Morocco, 1921–1926," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 14 (1988): 19 ff.
2. Shannon Fleming, "Rif War," *Encyclopædia Britannica Online,* last updated July 23, 2014, https://www.britannica.com/event/Rif-War.
3. Robert Montagne, *Révolution au Moroc* (Paris: France Empire, 1951). Montagne served in Morocco in the French army and later became a respected observer of France's impact on Syrian society.
4. Vincent Sheean, *An American among the Rif* (New York: Century, 1926); Vincent Sheean, *Personal History* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1935).
5. See "The Education of a Nationalist: An Interview with Emir Abd el-Karim," by William R. Polk, in *Perspective of the Arab World,* ed. William R. Polk (New York: Intercultural Publications, 1956), 24 ff. I met him in Cairo in 1954.
6. Ibid., 24.
7. Quotations in the following discussion are from the notes I took during my interview with Abd al-Karim in 1954.
8. Richard P. Hallion, *Strike from the Air: A History of Battlefield Air Attack, 1910–1945* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989), 67 ff. The Spanish air force also experimented with chemical poisoning of Berber farmland. See Sebastian Balfour, *Deadly Embrace: Morocco and the Road to the Spanish Civil War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 132 ff. The Riff area still reports the highest incidence of cancer in Morocco.
9. Hallion, *Strike from the Air,* 69.
10. Andrew Skeen, *Passing It On: Tribal Fight on the Northwest Frontier of India*

(Aldershot, UK: Gale and Polden, 1932).

CHAPTER 14: THE ACEH WAR AND DUTCH IMPERIALISM

1. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* (New York: Modern Library, 1937), 600–601.
2. J. I. Hans Bakker, "The Aceh War and the Creation of the Netherlands East Indies State," in *Great Powers and Little Wars: The Limits of Power,* ed. A. Hamish Ion and E. J. Errington (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1993), 57.
3. Ibid., 59. The name of the native troops led by the Dutch, Korps maréchaussée, was borrowed from Holland as a new title for the unpopular gendarmerie. They were similar to the colonial troops of the British and French. Typical units were patrols of twenty native soldiers under the command of a Dutch officer.
4. Ibid., 57.
5. His covert operations extended to one of his marriages to a native woman. He curiously explained that it was a "scientific" experiment to study Muslim marriage.
6. This is one of the themes of the writings of Edward W. Said in *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978) and *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Knopf, 1993). It also has been addressed for British India by Gauri Viswanathan in *Masks of Conquest* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), for the Chechens of the Caucasus by Austin Jersild in *Orientalism and Empire* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), and Robert Irwin more generally in *Dangerous Knowledge* (New York: Overlook, 2006).

CHAPTER 15: JAMAL AL-DIN AL-AFGHANI AND THE MUSLIM AWAKENING

1. Professor Nikki R. Keddie has written a number of works that touch on Afghani's career. One of the best deals with the controversy Afghani was partly responsible for provoking: *Religion and Rebellion in Iran* (London: Frank Cass, 1966). Keddie uses the published catalogue of Afghani's papers to determine that he was a Sunni Muslim from Afghanistan, not a Shiah Muslim from Iran, thus correcting the version of his life story that he and his Arab followers put out.
2. Little groups like his were then and later common all over the Muslim world. Some were fairly formal, as apparently his was, with more or less set lectures, but others were informal, with readings and discussions of hard-to-obtain or banned books or the sharing of ideas. One such discussion group was later portrayed in a delightful book, *Reading Lolita in Tehran,* by Azar Nafisi. During my stay in Baghdad in 1951 and 1952, my little apartment was used, as the only more or less neutral ground, by a group of angry young men and women who met to discuss the British-controlled government. The formula was the reverse of the Cairo meetings of Afghani: he was the teacher of his group, while I was the student of my group.
3. Albert Hourani, *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1962), 109.
4. Hourani, *Arabic Thought,* 113.

5. Still the best book on Abduh is Charles C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt: A Study of the Modern Reform Movement Inaugurated by Muhammad 'Abduh* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933). Elie Kedourie, in *Afghani and Abduh* (London: Frank Cass, 1966), offers some new materials and attempts to show Afghani and Abduh as covert atheists. Also see Keddie's writings, mentioned previously.
6. The magazine's name is difficult to translate. It is usually rendered as "the unbreakable bond" but really means something like "a stirrup" (which upholds one). It was one of the dissident and more or less clandestine journals of the time. Also in Paris, Aleksandr Herzen founded *Kolokol* (The bell), which similarly influenced a generation of Russians.
7. Quoted in Ernest Dawn, *From Ottomanism to Arabism* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1973), 136–137.
8. L. Carl Brown, "The Islamic Reformist Movement in North Africa," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 2 (1964): 55–63; Hélène Carrère d'Encausse, *Islam and the Russian Empire: Reform and Revolution in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988).
9. Gasprinskii inspired the Islamic reform movement known as Jadid (new; Turkish: *cedid*), which radiated out of Bukhara around the turn of the twentieth century. See Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 80 ff.
10. Ibid., 124.
11. Ibid., 109.
12. In the words of Wilfred Cantwell Smith in *Modern Islam in India* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1946), 111.
13. Muhammad Iqbal, "The Secrets of the Self," quoted in Smith, *Modern Islam in India,* 111–112.

CHAPTER 16: THE STRUGGLE TO DEFINE IDENTITY

1. Ziya Gökalp, *Türkçülügün Asaslari* [The bases of Turkizm] (Ankara, Turkey: Ankara Publisher, 1337 AH [1920 CE]), 19–20. In Ottoman Turkish, my translation. For a recent consideration of Gökalp's ideas on government structure and politics, see Markus Dressler, "Rereading Ziya Gökalp: Secularism and Reform of the Islamic State in the Late Young Turk Period," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 47, no. 3 (2015): 511 ff.
2. We shall see this when I consider the thought of Sayyid Qutb. One of his books is a charming account of life in his village, *Tifl min al-Qarya,* translated by John Calvert and William Shepard as *A Child from the Village* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004). An Egyptian classic of the same genre is Taha Husain's *al-Ayam* (The days), but whereas Qutb is nostalgic, Hussein is critical. Qutb spent the rest of his life arguing for the virtues that could be brought to the lives of all Muslims, even the peasants of the villages, if Islam were fully understood and embraced, whereas Hussein, whom I knew toward the end of his life, wanted to replace whatever Egyptians owed to Afro-Asian "Arabism," which he thought was not much, by emphasizing its affinities to the culture of the Mediterranean.
3. During a trip across the Arabian Nafud I made with a group of Banu Duwasir bedouin, I recited to them just at dusk each day verses of one of the great pre-Islamic poets. We were all tired from hours of camel riding and

walking, and everyone was hungry and thirsty, but as I started to recite, each person froze in whatever he was doing. Many of the words were unfamiliar to them, but the overall effect was hypnotizing. On another occasion, I was taken to a rustic "cabaret" that catered to the Rwala bedouin who were visiting Aleppo. As I walked in, a belly dancer was performing. I looked around the audience, expecting that the bedouin, who I assumed had never seen such a performance, would be enthralled. Some were, but conversation continued and the men carried on sipping their coffee. Then, when the dancer finished in a whirl of diaphanous veils, she was replaced by a far less attractive and more soberly dressed woman who began to recite poetry. The effect was electric. No one stirred. All noise ceased. Coffee cups were tabled. But lips, at least those I could see of the men sitting near me, moved with hers.

4. In a later development, one offshoot of Sufism, the Deobandi movement, turned militant and gave rise to a number of resistance movements, including the Taliban of Afghanistan. The Naqshbandi were active throughout much of Asia, and dozens of other orders were to be found from Indonesia to Morocco.
5. In the town in which I lived while I was writing a history of Lebanon, *The Opening of South Lebanon* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), Ammatur in the Shuf mountains, the Druze population was divided into two groups, or *jibs,* as the villagers called them, each of which regarded itself as kindred and the other as neighbors but not full kin. I tracked down 276 marriages, of which only 11 were with members of the other group (ibid., 185 and accompanying chart). Moreover, each of these divisions was further divided into four segments. Graphically expressed, each of these segments was a little town. And this practice was transferred by migrants to cities. In each city there would be neighborhoods composed primarily of people from the same town.
6. The book was called, in one of those flowery old titles so beloved in Arabic, *The Extraction of Gold from a Review of Paris* (*Takhlis al Ibriz fi Talkhis Bariz*).
7. That was the explosion of Egyptology. Temples were being dug out of the sand, treasures were appearing in the market, and hieroglyphs were being deciphered. On the "awakening" of the buried past, see the delightful book by John Wilson, *Signs and Wonders upon Pharaoh* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).
8. As Albert Hourani interprets *hubb al-watan* in *Arabic Thought in the Liberal Age, 1798–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1962), 78–79, it the "binding force" of societies, what the great North African historian Ibn Khaldun called *asabiyah,* but applied not, as Ibn Khaldun did, to a kinship group but to a territory.
9. I have used Hourani's translation, ibid., 79, from Tahtawi's *Manahij* (Cairo: n.p., 1912), 99.
10. In English, the name was more or less the same as that of Western newspapers of the same period: "the examiner," or, literally, "the replies."
11. The Arabic title was *Nafir al Surriya.*
12. A. T. Tibawi, "The American Missionaries in Beirut and Butrus Al-Bustani," in *St. Antony's Papers,* ed. Albert Hourani, no. 16 (London: Chatto and Windus, 1963), 171. Tibawi had access to all Bustani's unpublished papers.
13. Egyptians were mercilessly satirized by the governor of Sinai, Major C. S. Jarvis, in illustrated books that expressed the contempt of every English

man, woman, and child for all things Egyptian. *Oriental Spotlight* went through eight printings; even more raucous and popular was *The Back Garden of Allah.* I have discussed similar attitudes toward the Indians by the British. The Russians and the French, on the contrary, admired the wild fighting tribesmen of the Caucasus and the Atlas Mountains.

14. Fear of pan-Islam would be picked up in later years by Soviet political police. In the 1930s, the Russians believed themselves to be under attack by a variety of "Capitalists," a group that then even included the Chinese and their Muslim sometime protégés in Sinkiang province and Uyghur émigrés whom the former Russian government had taken west into what became Soviet Central Asia. David Brophy, *Uyghur Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 220.

CHAPTER 17: THE FIRST IRANIAN REVOLUTION

1. E. G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905–1909* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910), 112–113. Browne, who held the chair of Persian at Cambridge, was unusually well informed on contemporary Iran, having spent a year visiting all the major locations and getting to know many of the key figures in the revolutionary movement, which he described in *A Year amongst the Persians* (London: A. C. Black, 1893). He had an extraordinary grasp of Iranian culture, which he recounted in his massive *A Literary History of Persia* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1902).
2. Although bast appeared quaint to Western observers, it was by no means unique to Iran. Among the Arab nomads, it was customary for a person seeking protection to grasp the tent ropes of a tribesman, who was then obliged to protect him. Places of sanctuary were well known among the Arabs (harams), the ancient Hebrews (tabernacles), the Greeks and Romans (temples and even groves), and throughout Europe (churches). In medieval England, there were about two dozen places into which the king's officials were not allowed to enter in pursuit of an outlaw.
3. Because many of them were ulama who had spent years studying Arabic, they would have known that the basic meaning of the word *adal* is "balance," used in reference to the adjustment of saddlebags so that one side does not pull down the other. Thus, by assembling in the majlis-i-adalat, the people would "balance" the rule of the shah and his government. The concept was different from the Western "parliament," a place where people talk; a majlis, as the parliament began to be called, is a place where people sit together.
4. Mangol Bayat, *Iran's First Revolution: Shiism and the Constitutional Revolution of 1905–1909* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 125.
5. The word is evocative: as I have explained, the root captures the basic sense. "BDD" suggests dividing, scattering, and wasting, and in the form in which it was applied to the shah, it meant "to rule as a despot," "to pull apart from the community."
6. The wording of the threat cannot be certain, but the context in which it must have been given is set out in Browne, *Persian Revolution,* 156–161.
7. Ibid., 121.
8. Ibid., 127.

1. As I pointed out in Chapters 6 and 10, Britain had a subsidiary interest in stifling the growing Egyptian industry and in opening the country to English manufactured goods.
2. Based on his study of the German archives, the English diplomatic historian A. J. P. Taylor believes that in fact Bismarck was using the African "scramble" to incite German's European powers against one another. See his *Struggle for Mastery in Europe, 1848–1918* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1954). He quotes Bismarck as saying, "My map of Africa lies in Europe. Here lies Russia and here lies France, and we are in the middle. That is my map of Africa." As Taylor comments, "He was seeking a reconciliation with France; and to prove his bona fides needed a dispute with England" (294).
3. The then-current English view (which the authors seem to share) and the government policy is laid out in R. E. Robinson and J. Gallagher, "The Partition of Africa," in *The New Cambridge Modern History,* ed. F. H. Hinsley, vol. 9 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). As they wrote, Prime Minister Robert Salisbury was driven by fear: "To be safe in Egypt, he adopted the policy of keeping other powers out of the Nile basin. . . . Fear lay behind this policy, the alarmist calculation that 'a civilized, European power . . . in the Nile valley . . . could so reduce the water supply as to ruin' Egypt. So from 1890 the British ran up their bids, claiming a sphere along the whole river and its approaches, from Mombasa and Wadi Halfa to Lake Victoria Nyanza. . . . By 1891 there was little more of Africa left to divide" (9:613).
4. Russia had reached the limit of its advance well short of the huge barrier of the Hindu Kush mountains. Even if the Russians could have gotten a few forces across this barrier, in spite of the transport problems involved, they would have faced the British Indian Army, which was one of the most powerful in the world. That was the reality, but the British officials in India promoted the fear of Cossacks somehow managing to trek south across the mountains and desert to overwhelm India. Then as now, intelligence appreciations often incited government leaders to actions that were costly, often unnecessary, and of no benefit but were justified by fear.
5. It was still remembered when I first visited the bazaars of Iraq, Syria, and Arabia that English merchants thought that cotton cloths used as handkerchiefs and head coverings should be white, and that is what they sold; German merchants asked what the customers wanted. They wanted brightly colored cloth, so that is what the Germans provided.
6. Quoted by James Joll in *Europe since 1870* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 83.
7. The idea of a notional wall was picked up in the 1950s by US secretary of state John Foster Dulles in a series of pacts: NATO, the Central Treaty Organization (the "Baghdad Pact"), and the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization. CENTO virtually re-created what had been the British policy to protect India. Ironically, the United States had no India to protect; by Dulles's time, it was the oil fields of Arabia and Iran that more or less took the place India had occupied in British strategy.
8. Taylor, *The Struggle for Mastery in Europe,* 290.
9. It later gave up the Mosul area, with its enormous Kirkuk oil field, in return for participation in the British-government-controlled company set up to exploit oil throughout the British-dominated Middle East.

10. Russia had separately achieved the ambition to acquire the Turkish straits in a secret Anglo-Russian treaty signed in March 1915 in return for recognizing British control of Egypt.
11. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914* (New York: Random House, 1989), 60.
12. William Ernest Hocking, *The Spirit of World Politics* (New York: Macmillan, 1932), 5 ff.
13. William Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890–1902* (New York: Knopf, 1951). Quotations drawn from 68 and 80–83.
14. This, as I will later point out, was similar to the feeling among American workers today in the arms industry.
15. Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, and Sandrine Lemaieis, in a series of articles whose argument is summarized in "Les 'zoos humains,' symbols oubliés de l'époque colonial," in *Zoos humains* (Paris: La Decouverte, Poche/ Sciences humaines et sociales, 2004), 63–71. Meanwhile, Americans were treated by the Bronx Zoo to the sight of pygmies.
16. The Ottoman Army Special Forces unit, commanded by a Circassian officer, was composed of volunteers from all over the Muslim world, from the Caucasus and Afghanistan through the Balkans and the Middle East to North Africa and the Sudan. They constituted a demonstration of Pan-Islamic dedication. See Benjamin C. Fortna, *The Circassian: A Life of Eşref Bey, Late Ottoman Insurgent and Special Agent* (London: Hurst, 2016), 152.
17. The following account is drawn from the account of Ronald Storrs in his memoir, *Orientations* (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1937), 148.
18. Fortna, *The Circassian,* 140, drawing on Ashraf's diary.
19. Like the Sykes-Picot negotiations and agreement, the Husain-McMahon correspondence was secret. The contents were the subject of lively speculation but were not officially revealed until 1939, when they were published by the British government in *Correspondence between Sir Henry McMahon and the Sharif Hussein of Mecca, July 1915–March 1916,* Cmd. 5957 (London: HMSO, 1939), and were studied in *Report of a Committee Set Up to Consider Certain Correspondence between Sir Henry McMahon and the Sharif of Mecca in 1915 and 1916,* Cmd. 6974 (London: HMSO, 1939).
20. Lawrence and his campaign have given rise to the major romantic myth of the First World War. In fact, it was a minor campaign in the traditional style of Arab raids, as I discuss in Chapter 19. The real war in the Ottoman Empire was in Iraq, where Ottoman troops forced the surrender of the remaining 13,309 British-Indian soldiers; the enormously important and costly Gallipoli campaign; and the Russo-Turkish war in the Caucasus. Arabia, militarily, was a sideshow. That the British so regarded it is shown by their reneging on the most critical and urgent of their promises to the sharif, to supply him a brigade of British troops in Jiddah and a squadron of aircraft to counter the planes the Turks were sending down to strafe the Arab positions.
21. The Turkish military governor of Syria, Jamal Pasha, who should have known about the breakaway moves of Arab nationalists, later wrote that after finding in the French consular records evidence of Arab plans to revolt, he had quickly shifted the Arab units in the Turkish army away from Syria. He was, he said, "certain that to the executions [of Arabs suspected of nationalist sedition in 1915 and 1916] alone do we owe the fact that there was no rising in Syria." Jamal Pasha, *Memories of a Turkish Statesman*

(London: Hutchinson, 1922), 205. The struggle against the Italians in Libya was another seedbed of Arab nationalism. Among the volunteers in that war was the Egyptian Abd al-Rahman Azzam, who would help to found and become secretary general of the League of Arab States. He later wrote, "When I was a boy, I was an Egyptian Muslim. Being an Egyptian and Muslim didn't change. But from 1919 on, with Syria and Iraq gone, I started talking of Arabism. Living with the bedouin, etc. worked gradually to make me a supporter for something Arabic. The Tripolitanian Republic decisively marked the shift to Arabism." He is quoted by Ralph Coury in " 'Arabian Ethnicity' and Arab Nationalism: The Case of Abd al-Rahman Azzam," *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 25 (1988): 69.

22. Storrs, *Orientations,* 154.

CHAPTER 19: THE POSTWAR MIDDLE EAST

1. Ray Stannard Baker, *Woodrow Wilson and World Settlement* (New York: Doubleday, 1922), 1:262.
2. A good account is Harry N. Howard's *The King-Crane Commission* (Beirut: Khayat, 1963). More recent is Andrew Patrick, *America's Forgotten Middle East Initiative* (New York: Taurus, 2015).
3. My cousin Frank Polk took over as head of the American delegation to the peace conference from President Wilson when he returned to Washington. Finding that the British and French were reneging on their frequently repeated promises to allow "the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous populations," the Arab delegation leader, Amir Faisal, appealed to Frank to act as arbitrator. He replied that he could do so only if the British and French agreed. Since he had to struggle constantly with them even to be admitted to the key meetings of the conference, he knew they would not agree. Consequently, he urged the Arab delegates to seek other allies, particularly the Zionists. His official papers and diary are collected in the Frank L. Polk Papers, Manuscripts and Diaries, Yale University Library. The meeting is reported for October 17, 1919.
4. E. L. Woodward and R. Butler, *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939,* first series, vol. 4 (1919) (London: HMSO, 1952), 364–365.
5. Telegram R from Political Baghdad to Secretary of State for India, London, no. 9926, November 16, 1918, FO 882/13, X/3 9136, Public Record Office, London.
6. This is well described by Aaron Klieman in *Foundations of British Policy in the Arab World: The Cairo Conference of 1921* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1970) and criticized by David Fromkin in *A Peace to End All Peace* (New York: Holt, 1989).
7. Drawn from my book *Understanding Iraq* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 80–81.
8. David Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860–1940,* Studies in Military and Strategic History (London: Kings College, 1994), 213.
9. Matta Akawi, *Curriculum Construction in Economic, Social Hygienic and Educational Conditions and Problems of the Country* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1942), 186–187. Akawi was later director general of education.
10. Paul Monroe et al., *Report of the Educational Inquiry Commission* (Baghdad:

Government Press, 1932), 37.

11. The Italian Fascists and the pro-Fascist Jewish Betar members wore black shirts; the Nazis, brown; the Spanish Falangists, blue; the Norwegian Fascists, yellow; and so on.
12. Ernest Dowson, *An Inquiry into Land Tenure and Related Questions* (Baghdad: Garden City Press, [1932]), 20.

CHAPTER 20: PALESTINE, THE MUCH PROMISED LAND

1. Theodor Herzl pointed out that when they arrived even in such a sophisticated city as Berlin, they were met with the simple command, *Juden Raus!* (Out with the Jews!). Theodor Herzl, *The Jewish State* (New York: American Zionist Emergency Council, 1946), 85–86.
2. "The Return to Palestine," *New Liberal Review,* December 1901. Actually, the then-Ottoman province was at least twice as thickly populated as the United States.
3. Quoted in Yonatan Mendel, "Divide and Divide and Divide and Rule," review of *1929: Year Zero of the Arab-Israeli Conflict,* by Hillel Cohen, *London Review of Books,* October 6, 2016, 14.
4. Quoted in Leonard Stein, *The Balfour Declaration* (London: Vallentine-Mitchell, 1961), 64.
5. Stein, *Balfour Declaration,* 64–65.
6. The English fear of a flood of Jewish refugees was made clear in a 1903 Royal Commission report on alien immigration. The report's findings were emphasized by former secretary of state for the colonies Joseph Chamberlain in a speech on December 15, 1904, in which he told his audience, "You are suffering from the unrestricted import of cheaper goods. You are suffering also from the unrestricted immigration of the people who make these goods. . . . How is their salvation to be accomplished without the ruin of our own people at home?" He went on to say that the "best solution" was to find some place, far from England, "where they could find subsistence without in any way interfering with the subsistence of others." He thought that British-ruled East Africa would be ideal. Ibid., 32–33.
7. Richard H. G. Gottheil, *Zionism* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1914), 66.
8. Stein, *Balfour Declaration,* 59.
9. "Memorandum by Mr. Balfour (Paris) respecting Syria, Palestine, and Mesopotamia," August 11, 1919, printed in E. L. Woodward and Rohan Butler, eds., *Documents on British Foreign Policy, 1919–1939* (London: HMSO, 1952), 341.
10. *Memorandum on the Administration of Palestine under the Mandate* (Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1947), 4.
11. *Report to the Council of the League of Nations on the Administration of the Palestine Mandate* (London: Colonial Office, 1932).
12. The same procedure is being used today in various parts of Africa to stimulate foreign, mainly Chinese, investment. As the Palestinian villagers were, Ethiopian villagers are today being evicted from their lands or turned into serfs to work them.
13. Laurence Oliphant, *Haifa, or Life in Modern Palestine* (London, 1887), 60.
14. The Jewish Agency land expert, Dr. Arthur Ruppin, pointed out that "there

are 2,000,000 donums [500,000 acres] of land in Palestine upon which as many people could live as in the whole of the remainder of the country . . . [and] this area of high fertility would, according to the [1936 Royal] Commission's map, lie almost entirely within the Jewish state." Quoted in Arnold Toynbee, ed., *Survey of International Affairs* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1937), 1:545.

15. Fenn Morris, *Righteous Victims: A History of the Zionist-Arab Conflict, 1981–1939* (London: John Murray, 1999), 136.
16. Royal Commission, *Report* (London: HMSO, 1937), ch. 4, p. 121, para. 36.
17. Ibid., ch. 1, p. 8, paras. 16–17.
18. *Great Britain and Palestine, 1915–1945,* Information Papers 20 (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1946), 26–27.
19. Their statement was published in Royal Commission, *Report,* 401–403.
20. Ibid., 370–372.
21. Reprinted in *A Survey of Palestine* (Jerusalem: Government Printer, 1946), 1:73.
22. I saw this when I spent a month there in 1946.
23. And those who pointed to evidence of the results were publicly excoriated as anti-Semites. See, for example, Christopher Mayhew and Michael Adams, *Publish It Not: The Middle East Cover-Up* (London: Longman, 1975).
24. See the Israeli journalist Benny Morris's *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and the Israeli scholar Ilan Pappe's *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (London: Oneworld, 2006). Both books were based on Israeli government archives.
25. *Sunday Times* (London), July 14, 1969.

CHAPTER 21: TURKEY AND ATATüRK

1. Ernest Ramsaur Jr., *The Young Turks* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1953), 95.
2. A standard ploy of media reporters, as I found in Washington, was to suggest that the official they were approaching was not an insider; the official is then expected to prove otherwise by revealing what he or she knows or acting as though he or she already knows what the reporter wants to find out. This was exactly what was done to the Young Turk who revealed the plan for a coup.
3. I have described the use of ciphers from ancient Sparta up to the present in *Neighbors and Strangers: The Fundamentals of Foreign Affairs* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 187 ff.
4. Turkish: Cemiyet Ittihat ve Terakki.
5. This was essentially the organization used by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in the 1930s and by insurgents in the city of Algiers in the 1950s.
6. Dankwart A. Rustow, "Atatürk as Founder of a State," *Dædalus* 97 (1968): 795.
7. *A Speech Delivered by Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, 1927* (Istanbul: Ministry of Education Printing Plant, 1963), 1.
8. Ibid. That must have been a particularly galling personal issue since a British agent had tried to murder him, as I mentioned previously.
9. Ibid., 7.

10. Ibid., 577.
11. Ibid., 738.

CHAPTER 22: REZA SHAH OF IRAN

1. When the tide of war turned in favor of the British, the tribesmen deserted him. Unlike Lawrence, who is regularly celebrated, Wassmuss has been virtually forgotten. His message to the Bakhtiari tribesmen is quoted by Peter Hopkirk in *On Secret Service East of Constantinople* (London: John Murray, 1994), 111.
2. Gavin R. G. Hambly, "The Pahlavi Autocracy: Riza Shah, 1921–1941," in *The Cambridge History of Iran,* ed. Peter Avery, Gavin Hambly, and Charles Melville (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 7:215–216.
3. Martin Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century* (New York: William Morrow, 1997), 1:11.
4. "Azadistan" can be translated from the Farsi as "the Free Land." The word would be adopted later by Kashmiri Muslim guerrillas.

CHAPTER 23: ISLAM IN INDIA AND THE FORMATION OF PAKISTAN

1. David Omissi, *The Sepoy and the Raj: The Indian Army, 1860–1940,* Studies in Military and Strategic History (London: Kings College, 1994), 132–133.
2. Ibid., 216, 238.
3. George Orwell, *Burmese Days* (New York: Harpers, 1934), 68.
4. Ferdinand Mount, "Lumpers v. Splitters," *London Review of Books,* March 31, 2016.
5. A summary of British attitudes toward Indians is given in R. C. Majumdar, "Social Relations between Englishmen and Indians," in *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance,* ed. K. M. Munshi and R. C. Majumdar, vol. 10, pt. 2 of *The History and Culture of the Indian People,* ed. R. C. Majumdar (Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1965), 337 ff. The author quotes dozens of examples and summarizes, "The attitude of a conquering people towards the subject races is bound to be rude and arrogant, at best condescending, in most cases, and the Englishmen in India formed no exception to this rule."
6. Ibid.
7. Quoted in ibid., 337.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., 348.
10. Quoted in Omissi, *Sepoy and the Raj,* 194.
11. On British policy on famines, the Indian journalist and statesman Shashi Tharoor, in his *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India* (London: Hurst, 2017), wrote that "from 1770 to 1900, 25 million Indians are estimated to have died in famines. . . . The famines of the twentieth century probably took the total well over 35 million" (151). And on the British withholding of food relief during the Second World War, he wrote, "Nothing can excuse the odious behaviour of Winston Churchill, who deliberately ordered the diversion of food from starving Indian civilians to well-supplied British soldiers and even to top up European stockpiles in Greece and elsewhere" (160).
12. R. C. Majumdar and K. K. Datta, "The Administrative Organisation," in

Munshi and Majumdar, *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance,* vol. 9, pt. 1, 828, 835–836.

13. Ibid., 970.
14. Curzon's 1892 speech to Parliament, partly quoted in ibid., 768–769.
15. Ibid., 769.
16. Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), 148.
17. Quoted in R. C. Majumdar and K. K. Datta, "English Education," in Munshi and Majumdar, *British Paramountcy and Indian Renaissance,* vol. 10, pt. 2, 46.
18. The college survived the trauma of partition and grew into one of the major Indian universities, now known as Aligarh University.
19. As James Joll wrote in *Europe since 1870* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1973), 82, "There were few middle-class families which did not have some contact with the Indian Empire through a son in in the Indian administration or a cousin in the army."
20. This and other parts of the account on the wartime and postwar negotiations are most accessibly set out in Stanley Wolpert's excellent *A New History of India* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) and in his *Jinnah of Pakistan* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984).
21. The causes of the famine, which particularly affected the Muslim population of Bengal (later Bangladesh), were initially natural (severe storms, tidal waves, and a cyclone) but were accentuated by the tax structure, distribution failures, hording, and government failure to act. Churchill personally refused to allow diversion of shipping to alleviate the famine in 1943. Both he and Lord Linlithgow insisted, in the face of the facts, that there was no shortage of food there. So millions died.
22. The so-called Indian National Army was made up of the thirty thousand troops that the British surrendered at the fall of Singapore; Bose had been, along with Nehru and Gandhi, one of the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement and was still regarded as very popular, perhaps even more popular than Nehru, in India, where he was known as the Netaji or "Respected Leader." The attack was also aided by the Burmese leader Aung San, the father of Aung San Suu Kyi. The attack reached India but petered out in 1945. Captured senior officers were put on trial, but the trial turned out to be a lesson in Indian patriotism and the indicted officers became national heroes. On Bose, see Sugata Bose, *His Majesty's Opponent* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011).
23. On this issue, see Jaswant Singh, *Jinnah, Partition, Independence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
24. Wolpert, *New History of India,* 342.
25. Wolpert, *Jinnah of Pakistan,* 294.
26. For a general survey, see Ishtiaq Ahmed, *The Punjab Bloodied, Partitioned and Cleansed: Unravelling the 1947 Tragedy through Secret British Reports and First-Person Accounts* (Karachi, Pakistan: Oxford University Press, 2012).
27. Speech of August 11, 1947, to the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, reported in *Dawn,* August 14, 1947.
28. Husain Haqqani, "Breaking Up Is Not Hard to Do," *Foreign Affairs,* March/April 2013.
29. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance 2013* (London: Routledge, 2013).

30. Disclosure: we were almost exactly the same age, both studied political science as undergraduates, both studied at Oxford, and got to know one another when my daughter, his son Mir, and his daughter Benazir were fellow students at Harvard and when my daughter spent a summer as the Bhuttos' guest in Pakistan.
31. Quoted in "Pakistan's Nuclear Ambitions," *Economist,* January 3, 2008. Bhutto was well aware that the quest for nuclear power also subsumed the pursuit of the latest developments in science and technology. He feared that if Pakistan stood aside, doing so would "impose a crippling limitation on the development of Pakistan's science and technology." To try to avoid this, he created a world-class Institute of Theoretical Physics in 1967. When, in 1972, the nuclear scientist Abdul Qadeer Khan returned to Pakistan, work on weaponizing atomic research was speeded up.
32. On Pakistan's "miscalculation" of the value of nuclear weapons as a deterrent during the Kargil crisis of 1999, see Owen Bennett Jones, *Pakistan: Eye of the Storm* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002).
33. "Prime Minister's Address to the Nation over the Radio and Television Networks on December 20, 1975," Bhutto website, accessed April 18, 2017, http://bhutto.org/1976_speech6.php.
34. Report from the Pakistani Sustainable Development Policy Institute, *Statesman,* September 25, 2012. That equates to nearly fifty-nine million people. Thus his action raised roughly twenty-five million out of poverty, but still today about three in four rural households in Balochistan live below the poverty line. Ashfak Bokhar, "Skewed Land Ownership, Chronic Rural Poverty," *Dawn,* October 15, 2012.
35. There was much in his program that was reprehensible and some that was even illegal. Bhutto was by no means a civil libertarian and did not gracefully brook opposition even when he was legally required to do so. When the leaders of the province of Balochistan balked at his policies, he dismissed them from office and sent in the army to put down public protests. Several thousand protesters were killed. When the army commanders refused to act against the police in another incident, Bhutto cashiered them. Attempts at breakaway by Sindhi and Pashtun separatists were brutally put down. Worse was his agreement to insert a clause in the 1973 constitution declaring that members of the Ahmadiyah community, an offshoot of Islam, would no longer be considered Muslims.

CHAPTER 24: KASHMIR, THE PALESTINE OF CENTRAL ASIA

1. R. K. Parmu, *A History of Muslim Rule in Kashmir, 1320–1819* (Delhi: People's Publishing House, 1969), 432. Parmu is generally hostile to Islam and seeks to show that conversion was, in the early phase, just a sort of insurance policy.
2. Mohammed Ishaq Khan, *Kashmir's Transition to Islam: The Role of Muslim Rishis* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002); Hamid Naseem Rafiabadi, *Sufism and Rishism in Kashmir: The Lesser Known Aspects of Some Sufi Orders* (Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir: City Book Center, 2011).
3. The exchange rate of the silver Nanak Shahi rupee (minted in Srinagar in 1819) was about one shilling sterling. Each one of the remaining, independent principalities minted its own currency. Because Kashmir was an active commercial center, all the currencies of Afghanistan, the East India

Company, various Indian principalities, the Punjab, and others circulated in its markets and particularly in Srinagar. Charles Baron von Hugel, *Kashmir under Maharaja Ranjit Singh,* translated and annotated by D. C. Sharma (New Delhi: Atlantic, n.d.), 70.

4. "Treaty of Amritsar (1846)," *Wikipedia,* last modified April 14, 2017, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Treaty_of_Amritsar_(1846), Article 1.
5. I am simplifying somewhat: Gulab Singh was a Dogra, that is, a member of an ethnic group with its own language, Dogri (now recognized as one of the national languages of India), which had converted to Sikhism at the time of Guru Nanak. While some Dogras had inhabited the Jammu area of Kashmir, most were from the Punjab, as was Gulab Singh.
6. As used in Kashmir, the word "Pandit" indicated a member of the large social group, composed of several castes and numbering well over two hundred thousand, whose members typically held positions as clerks, tax collectors, and civil servants. In India proper, the word was an honorific for a man learned in Hindu scripture and law and was the official title of the religious guide to the Supreme Court.
7. The British political officer Captain Clade Martine Wade reporting to the then adviser to Governor General Sir William Macnaghten, William Moorcroft, MS EUR D. 264, p. 38, India Office Library, London, cited by Hugel, *Kashmir,* 53.
8. Ibid. Also see Captain Claude Martine Wade, quoted in M. J. Akbar, *Kashmir Behind the Vale* (Delhi: Viking Penguin, 1991). The same phrase was attributed to a later Hindu chief minister, Albion Bannerji, by Tariq Ali in *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusade, Jihads and Modernity* (London: Verso, 2002), 225.
9. Sumantra Bose, in his excellent book *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 17–18.
10. Prem Nath Bazaz, *Inside Kashmir* (Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir: Mirpur, 1941), 252, cited in Bose, *Kashmir,* 16.
11. Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah's name is confusing. His given name was Muhammad. The second name usually is the name of a father or, sometimes, a clan, tribe, or location. It is often treated in the Indian sources as a family name. I have fallen back on the classical form, using his first name and his honorific, shaikh. Where there is a potential for misinterpretation, I use his entire name, as his son and grandson followed him as major politicians.
12. I have simplified by using the name Kashmir. Jammu was the second city and originally a separate city-state. It was combined with Kashmir when it was sold by the British to Gulab Singh in 1846, but the dual name was often continued, as it is for this organization.
13. Quoted in Ali, *Clash of Fundamentalisms,* 236.
14. Ibid., 234.
15. Ibid., 235.
16. Christopher Snedden, *Understanding Kashmir and Kashmiris* (London: Hurst, 2015), 182.
17. Signing the accession agreement, so that Jammu and Kashmir legally became part of India, did not much help Maharaja Hari Singh. In 1949, the Indian government forced him to give up power and leave the Indian-occupied part of the state. He died in Bombay (now known as Mumbai) in 1962.
18. UN Security Council resolution 47, document no. S/726, April 21, 1948.

19. Although the fit is not exact, the BJP is roughly the equivalent of Israel's right-wing Likud Party.
20. Pankaj Mishra, "The Birth of a Nation," *New York Review of Books,* October 5, 2000.
21. Ibid.
22. Kaz de Jong et al., *Kashmir: Violence and Health* (Amsterdam: Médecins sans Frontières, 2006), executive summary.
23. Ibid., 2.
24. Ibid., 3.
25. "The Disappeared of Kashmir," *Aljazeera,* April 18, 2011.
26. The report also quoted a spokesperson for Human Rights Watch, saying that the security forces' actions "can range from beatings, to severe torture, and even extrajudicial killings." Andrew Buncombe, "Kashmir Torture Is a Thing of the Past, Says India," *Independent,* December 18, 2010.
27. Jason Burke, "WikiLeaks Cables: India Accused of Systematic Use of Torture in Kashmir," *Guardian,* December 16, 2010.
28. The first Armed Forces Special Powers Act was passed in 1958 by the Lok Sabha, granting special powers to the armed forces in what the act terms "disturbed areas" in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. It was extended in July 1990 to Jammu and Kashmir as the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act.
29. Buncombe, "Kashmir Torture." The chief minister Omar Abdullah is the grandson of Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah.
30. "Hizbul Chief Syed Salahuddin Warns Pakistan," *Nation* (Lahore, Pakistan), May 17, 2013.
31. Dawn.com, January 6, 2013; "Militant Groups Continue Fighting," *Pakistan Observer* (Islamabad), January 28, 2013.

CHAPTER 25: ISLAM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

1. To put their seizure of Malacca in perspective, that was about twenty years after Columbus crossed the Atlantic to America and thirteen years after Vasco da Gama crossed the Indian Ocean to India.
2. The living conditions of the tin workers were appalling, and as many as half of each year's arriving laborers died from malaria, beriberi, and starvation. To keep the survivors working, drug dealers supplied them with opium. No one really was concerned; there were always more hungry Chinese to fill the ranks.
3. In nearby Burma, the OSS would mount one of its better operations under the command of my friend and former colleague Roger Hilsman. He gives his account in *American Guerrilla: My War behind Japanese Lines* (New York: Brassy's, 1990).
4. They were fought primarily by, on the one hand, Communist-led guerrillas and battle-trained insurgents who had been armed by the British with weapons captured from the Japanese and, on the other hand, by heavily armed units of the British army, Rhodesians, and colonial troops. The insurgents never amounted to more than about eight thousand combatants, while the British forces outnumbered them four or five to one. The Malayan National Liberation Army was headed by a Chinese Communist by the name

of Chin Peng. Chin Peng wrote his side of the events in *Alias Chin Peng: My Side of History: Recollections of a Revolutionary Leader* (Singapore: Media Masters, 2003). British tactics later became a model for the Vietnam War, with search-and-destroy operations, the use of Agent Orange to defoliate areas of jungle, and large-scale aerial bombing.

5. Various small Muslim groups tried to form an opposition to the broadly based Malaysian government. The government was keen to label them as deviant (*song sang*) and small. It operated against those who it charged were trying to upset the balance it had achieved with the Indian part of the Malay population, which, being Hindu, was polytheistic and, by Sunnah standards, illegal. One Muslim group attacked a Hindu temple in 1978 and was actually beaten to death by the temple guards. In 1994, Malaysia's National Fatwa Council issued a ruling declaring the major opposition group "deviationalist" and allowed the government to ban it under Islamic law. Ruhanas Harun, "Rising Up to the Challenges of Islamic Extremism and Militancy in Malaysia," Bulletin 516, November 20, 2015, Southeast Asia Regional Centre for Counter-Terrorism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Malaysia. Also see Prashanth Parameswaran, "Malaysia Says New Terror Group Trying to Create Islamic State," *Diplomat,* April 8, 2015. The alleged leader of the group was a veteran from Afghanistan and spent time in training in Syria, according to the Malaysian police chief. He indicated that ninety-two people were arrested, including "civil servants, navy and air force personnel and university students. Authorities have also identified 39 Malaysians in Syria and Iraq."
6. A convenient account of these events is provided in William H. Frederick and Robert L. Worden, *Indonesia: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 2011), and in M. C. Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia since c. 1300,* 2nd ed. (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), 110–118.
7. Generally Indonesians use only one name.
8. Sukarno had no second name, but he usually spelled his name in the Dutch fashion as Soekarno.

9. I have drawn on, among other sources, Ricklefs, *A History of Modern Indonesia,* and Adrian Vickers, *A History of Modern Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
10. Frances Gouda, *American Visions of the Netherlands East Indies/Indonesia: US Foreign Policy* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2002), 18.
11. I have profited from Ricklefs, *History of Modern Indonesia,* and Vickers, *History of Modern Indonesia.*
12. The Colombo Powers include Indonesia, Burma, Ceylon, India, and Pakistan.
13. A semiofficial summary of its importance is set out by the then deputy foreign minister of Sri Lanka, Wiswa Warnupala, in "Bandung Conference of 1955 and the Resurgence of Asia and Africa," *Daily News* (Sri Lanka), April 21, 1955.
14. The US secretary of state decided to boycott it. On American policy toward the South, see Jason C. Parker, "Small Victory, Missed Chance," in *The Eisenhower Administration, the Third World, and the Globalization of the Cold War,* ed. Kathryn C. Statler and Andrew L. Jones (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006). Four Americans went on their own: Congressman Adam Clayton Powell Jr., the novelist Richard Wright, Ethel Payne, and Carl Rowan, the last of whom later became a noted journalist and was an adviser to President Lyndon Johnson. The American ambassador to Indonesia, Hugh Cummings, was allowed by the State Department to attend as an observer.

CHAPTER 26: AFGHANISTAN'S CENTURIES OF RESISTANCE

1. Essentially the same assembly was gathered by the Germanic invaders of Europe, who called it the "Thing." Among Anglo-Saxons it was known as the "Folkmote." A similar gathering was known among the Amerindian Iroquois.
2. These forms of community action are also common in Western societies. To achieve community consensus on pressing matters, often foreign invasion or the collapse of public order, early Americans, the French, and the Russians created committees of safety, *comités de salut public,* and *soviets.* Even the short-lived Republic of Texas set up committees of safety and correspondence in 1832. Such groups were both administrators of customary law and political forums.
3. Recounted by William Dalrymple in *Return of a King* (New York: Knopf, 2013), 261, quoting from the account of Mirza Ata, *Naway Maavek* [The song of battles], 215–220.
4. Vincent Erye, *The Military Operations at Cabul Which Ended in the Retreat and Destruction of the British Army, January 1842; with a Journal of Imprisonment in Affghanistan [sic]* (London, 1843; repr., London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1976), 122. Erye was there and apparently read the letter.
5. John William Kaye, *History of the War in Afghanistan,* 4th ed. (London: W. H. Allen, 1890), 1:403.
6. Erye, *Military Operations,* 123. Indeed, as Erye pointed out, "in the whole Affghan nation we could not reckon on a single friend" (29).
7. Quoted in Kaye, *War in Afghanistan,* 1:451.
8. Erye, *Military Operations,* 115–116.
9. Ibid., 137. It is perhaps more than a historical coincidence that I was told by one of the former senior leaders of the Taliban movement that "if you do not negotiate, they [the Taliban] will take it all."

10. Erye, *Military Operations,* 138.
11. Ibid., 160.
12. Colin Mackenzie to Lt. Erye, July 29, 1842, printed in Erye, *Military Operations,* 167–168.
13. "Letter Addressed by Captain C. Mackenzie to Lieutenant Vincent Eyre," printed in Eyre, *Military Operations,* 170.
14. Erye, *Military Operations,* 195.
15. The higher level of education offered the whole range of Islamic studies.
16. There is a growing literature on the Muslim educational system. An older but general study is George Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981). More focused on South Asia is Dilip Hiro's *Apocalyptic Realm: Jihadists in South Asia* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012). Christopher M. Blanchard summarized what was known in *Islamic Religious Schools, Madrasas: Background* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, January 23, 2008). A good report on one village is Sabrina Tavernise's "Pakistan's Islamic Schools Fill Void, but Fuel Militancy," *International Herald Tribune,* May 3, 2009.

CHAPTER 27: THE SILK ROAD

1. *Arminius Vámbèry: His Life and Adventures, Written by Himself* (New York: Cassell, 1889), 223.
2. Seymour Becker, *Russia's Protectorates in Central Asia: Bukhara and Khiva, 1865–1924* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 7.
3. Alexander Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1973; photographic reproduction of the 1834 ed.).
4. Yuri Bregel, "Central Asia in the 18th-19th Centuries," in *The Encyclopædia Iranica,* ed. Ehsan Yarshater, online ed., vol. 7, 1996, accessed April 18, 2017, http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/central-asia-vii.
5. Burnes, *Travels into Bokhara,* 41.
6. Geoffrey Wheeler, *The Modern History of Soviet Central Asia* (New York: Praeger, 1964), 52–53.

CHAPTER 28: THE ALGERIAN REVOLUTION

1. Quoted in Alistair Horne's excellent account of Algeria, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954–1962* (London: Macmillan, 1977), 29. As head of the US government's Interdepartmental Task Force on Algeria during the last part of the war, I had access to all the American intelligence reports (most of which were provided by the French), but I have found Horne's account both more consistent and more insightful than most of the government studies so, for the reader's convenience, I will often cite it on obscure or controversial points. Another excellent account that I have often consulted on the latter part of the insurgency is William B. Quant, *Revolution and Political Leadership: Algeria, 1954–1968* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968). It is particularly valuable because Quant interviewed many of the key figures when they were free to talk.
2. Quoted in Horne, *Savage War of Peace,* 37.
3. As he said, "Had I discovered the Algerian nation, I would be a nationalist. .

. . However, I will not die for the Algerian nation, because it does not exist. . . . One cannot build on the wind." Quoted in ibid., 40.

4. Quoted in ibid., 43.
5. Statement by the leader of the Algerian Communist Party, Amar Ouzegan, in the party newspaper *Liberté*, quoted in ibid., 27.
6. *The Life of Benjamin Franklin Written by Himself,* ed. John Bigelow (Oxford: Geoffrey Cumberlege, 1924), 189–190.
7. Perhaps the best portrayal of this emotional transformation is given in two novels by Jean Lartéguy, *The Centurions* (New York: Dutton, 1962) and *The Praetorians* (New York: Dutton, 1963). For a more factual account, see Martin Windrow, *The Last Valley: Dien Bien Phu and the French Defeat in Vietnam* (New York: Da Capo, 2004), 655–657, and Geoffrey Bocca, *The Secret Army* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968), pt. 1.
8. Nasser told me of this incident in a private conversation.
9. In my book *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).
10. The Kabyle people are the Algerian Berbers, speakers of the Zwāwah dialect of the Berber language who inhabit the mountains in eastern Algeria.
11. Quoted in Horne, *Savage War of Peace,* 142.
12. Ben Bella, along with four of his close external associates, was arrested by the French three months later, on October 22, when his plane, piloted by a Frenchman, was forced down in Algeria. They were imprisoned in France for the next five years. Thus, effectively, direction of the resistance was in the hands of the internal leaders and particularly Abane throughout most of the rest of the war. Ultimately, Abane was to be murdered by his former FLN comrades.
13. The story of the battle is so meticulously recounted in Gillo Pontecorvo's film *La Battaglia di Algeri* (The Battle of Algiers) that it has been used to train American troops operating in Iraq.
14. One I saw when I toured Algeria was still filled with hundreds of orphan Arab and Berber children.
15. The Algerian war came close to destroying France itself. The Secret Army Organization attempted to murder President de Gaulle, and in reply he sent tanks and aircraft to attack the European suburb of Algeria. Paris was better prepared for an assault than it had been against the German army. Civil war was close as the society became increasingly polarized. I had a personal insight into the hatred. I helped to get the American government to assist a dedicated group of American doctors to take over and run a hospital for children in Algiers. Just as the doctors were about to move in, it was discovered that the departing French pediatricians had planted explosives that would have killed scores of their young patients.

CHAPTER 29: NASSER AND ARABIYAH

1. The Chinese used a similar insulting remark: they called the Uyghurs "turban heads" (*ch'an-t'ou*).
2. Nor, indeed, were American officers. When America began to supply tanks to the beleaguered British army, the American commander, who could not play tennis, swim, or eat there, remarked to his British counterpart that perhaps the tanks would not be delivered if his officers were kept out of the club. The rules quickly changed.

3. *Oriental Spotlight* (London: John Murray, 1937), 87.
4. Doreen Warriner, *Land and Poverty in the Middle East* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1948), ch. 3.
5. At my suggestion and with Nasser's approval, the *Time* magazine Middle East bureau chief Wilton Wynn called his biography of Nasser *The Search for Dignity*.
6. Costa Zurayq, *Meaning of the Disaster* (Beirut: Khayyat, 1956), 1. As he wrote, "Seven Arab states declare war on Zionism in Palestine, stop impotent before it, and then turn on their heels."
7. Musa Alami, "The Lesson of Palestine," *Middle East Journal* 3 (1949): 385.
8. Said Aburish, *Nasser: The Last Arab* (New York: St. Martin's, 2004), 27.
9. In one of our conversations, Nasser told me that he had stored the groups' weapons in the house of one of the group, Salah Dessouki, later governor of Cairo and fencing champion of Egypt, because as a member of the upper class, he would not be under suspicion and their weapons would be safe.
10. Two of his biographers, Said Aburish and Wynn, were close friends with whom I had many discussions about Nasser; his head of the Egyptian National Security Council, Hassan Sabry al-Kholy, and I spent many hours together discussing policy issues and Nasser; Charles Cremeans and other State Department and CIA officers and I reviewed their contacts and discussion while I was writing for the Policy Planning Council the proposed change in Egyptian-American relations; and I spent hours with Nasser discussing various Egyptian and American objectives and conflicts.
11. During my time on the Policy Planning Council, I sought the advice of the Rockefeller Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, and several outstanding experts on tropical health on bilharzia. What we concluded was that where the disease affected several hundred million people as it did in the vast river basins, it could be partially eradicated with such poisons as copper sulfate but at the cost of killing all the fish, birds, and other animals on which the villagers depended for much of their food. In effect, the cure was worse than the disease.
12. There had been a number of studies made of village conditions. Perhaps the earliest and most competent was a three-year-long study of five villages done by doctors from the Rockefeller Foundation. John M. Weir, "An Examination of Health and Sanitation in Egyptian Villages," *Journal of the Egyptian Public Health Association* 27, no. 3 (1952): 55 ff. No comparable study has been made, to my knowledge, of the urban lower class, but impressionistic accounts abound. One of the early ones was done by the missionary M. L. Whately, *Ragged Life in Egypt* (London: Seeley, Jackson and Halliday, 1863). More serious is Unni Wikan, *Life among the Poor in Cairo* (London: Tavistock, 1980). Nasser did not know of these, but they were discussed by the people around him. Since his father was a postal worker who lived and worked all over Egypt, young Nasser had observed the life of the poor.
13. Quoted in Doreen Warriner, *Land Reform and Development in the Middle East* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1957), 50–51.
14. The new focus even, for a long period of his presidency, encompassed the wider world of the Non-Aligned Movement.
15. Tom Little, "The Arab League: A Reassessment," *Middle East Journal* 10, no. 2 (1956): 138–139. The tendency to fracture into small groups was not only Arab: following the formation of Pakistan, the Pathans, Kashmiris, and

Sindhis "were demanding self-determination each for its respective local nationalism . . . with slogans like 'Sind for the Sindhis.' " Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Modern Islam in India* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1946), 271.

16. As a member of the Policy Planning Council, I had a three-hour discussion with Nasser on the implications for Egypt of his decision to intervene. He contended that because the Republicans had proclaimed that the "revolution" (*al-thawra*) was in his name and was done to accomplish the principles of Arabiyah, he had no choice. Moreover, as he rightly said, since the Republican government had been internationally recognized as legal and had requested Egyptian intervention, Egypt's action also was legal. On behalf of the US government, I said that we understood both of these arguments, but I pointed out that the same arguments had led us into the disastrous Vietnam War. I pointed to the urgency of meeting the almost desperate needs of the Egyptian people, and said that I believed the US government would be willing to do more to help with the domestic program. We discussed these issues in detail. Finally, President Nasser asked, "You don't think I will win this war, do you?" I replied, "No, Mr. President, I do not." He went on to say that the American government did not know what was happening in Yemen and invited me to go see. I was instructed by my government to go. I went.
17. Dr. Hassan Sabry al-Kholy, the director of the Egyptian National Security Council. I had left government service by then and was a professor of history at the University of Chicago and president of the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs, but I had written both in the media and directly to the then head of the National Security Council Walt Rostow two months before the outbreak of the war that it was about to happen. Neither the State Department nor Rostow believed me. When it happened, McGeorge Bundy was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson to take charge of American actions on the war, and he asked me to join him in the White House. My task was to write a draft peace treaty, but Johnson was not willing to consider any negotiations with the Egyptian government.
18. At the request of Prime Minister Meir, I negotiated it with President Nasser.

CHAPTER 30: SADDAM HUSAIN AND IRAQ

1. That was the coup that started Hafez al-Assad, the father of the current ruler, Bashar al-Assad, on the way to power in Syria.
2. I discussed his program with him in Baghdad in 1960. He would later be murdered by Saddam, who saw him as a rival. Perhaps the best account of the party's evolution in Iraq is Joseph Sassoon's *Saddam Hussein's Ba'th Party: Inside an Authoritarian Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011). To put it in the context of Iraqi history, see my *Understanding Iraq* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).
3. I had gotten to know them when I was studying in Baghdad in 1952. We gathered for "discussion" meetings, which were common all over the Muslim world. Because they were all cautious in expressing their thoughts on qawmiyah and their criticism of the pro-British government, they needed a neutral place to gather. My house was, for them, an oasis; for me it was a school in Iraqi political thought. So, when I returned to Baghdad immediately after the coup in 1958, the whole group, who had become the first cabinet, met me at the airport. I came at a good moment; shortly thereafter, they would all be purged by Qasim.

4. There is no hint in his conversations that he had heard about the Borgias or had read Machiavelli; he seems to have become a master strategist of power on his own.
5. As I have pointed out, under direct British rule and after nominal independence under those they allowed to run the country, little was done about education. Numbers multiplied but slowly and selectively. Few people were trained in such "practical" skills as engineering. When I lived in Baghdad in 1952 and 1953, Iraq still had only five mechanical engineers. When I returned on the eve of the American invasion in 2001, they numbered in the hundreds. Similar changes occurred in every field.
6. As he told Said Aburish. See *The Politics of Revenge* (London: Bloomsbury, 2000), 117.
7. As I pointed out, Britain had given Kuwait independence when it invaded Basra in the First World War. And, at least as late as the 1930s, the Kuwait Legislative Council agreed that it was a part of Iraq. Kuwait town then was just a fishing village, and those of its inhabitants who could afford to went to Baghdad to do their shopping and to be entertained. Frightened of Saudi Arabia, they regarded each Iraqi government as a sort of big brother. But as oil brought vast wealth, the newly rich Kuwaitis wanted to enjoy it themselves. To get others to help them stay independent, Kuwait undertook a vast aid program throughout the Muslim world. It worked. Even such Arab nationalists as President Nasser sought to win its favor and maintain its independence.
8. Later, in Cairo, the Egyptian writer and confidant of rulers Muhammad Hassanain Heikal quoted to me and others a poem recited to him by the king of Saudi Arabia on the benefit to third parties "when the snake and the scorpion go to war." King Khalid disliked both the Kuwaitis and the Iraqis. Many other Arabs agreed. Arab unity was far away and receding.
9. UN Security Council resolution 678, November 29, 1990. Among the thirty-four participants in the coalition were Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Syria, Kuwait, Morocco, Pakistan, Niger, Senegal, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, and Bangladesh. They contributed soldiers, money, or both.
10. UN Security Council resolution 687, April 3, 1991.
11. See John Maynard Keynes, *The Economic Consequences of the Peace* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Howe, 1920), esp. ch. 5.
12. Joyce Battle and Malcolm Byrne, "The Iraq War Ten Years After: Declassified Documents," Washington National Security Archive, March 19, 2013, documents 2 and 2b.
13. I discuss this period and put it in a historical context in my *Understanding Iraq* and, with Senator George McGovern, in *Out of Iraq* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006). I went to Baghdad for discussions with Saddam's deputy prime minister shortly before the American invasion of March 20, 2003. My impression was that Saddam had decided that there was nothing he could do to prevent the US attack and he had essentially dropped the issue of Islam, but also that he had nothing to put in its place. This also was the impression of the then Russian foreign minister, Evgeni Primakov, with whom I later compared notes.
14. This caused concern in the British government. The British foreign secretary warned that "it seemed clear that Bush has made up his mind to take military action." Battle and Byrne, "Iraq War," document 4.
15. Although not discussed at the time, Iraq had long been assisted in making

weapons of mass destruction, with American and British government approval, by Honeywell, Unisys, Sperry, Rockwell, Hewlett-Packard, DuPont, Eastman Kodak, Bechtel, and many European companies. The US Senate Banking Committee turned up evidence that dozens of biological agents had been shipped to Iraq under license from the Commerce Department, including anthrax. Michael Dobbs, "U.S. Had Key Role in Iraq Buildup," *Washington Post,* December 30, 2002.

16. Battle and Byrne, "Iraq War," document 6c, reported that if Iraq decided to construct a nuclear weapon, it would require between one and ten years to do so. Also see Nafeez Ahmed, "Iraq Invasion Was about Oil," *Guardian,* March 20, 2014.
17. Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz, a month before the attack, I suggested what I thought might head it off. Saddam would not consider it because he feared (I inferred) that any compromise on his side would result in a slide that would quickly end with either his removal from power or his assassination.
18. Paul Bignell, "Secret Memos Expose Link between Oil Firms and Invasion of Iraq," *Independent,* April 18, 2011. "Plans to exploit Iraq's oil reserves were discussed by government ministers and the world's largest oil companies the year before Britain took a leading role in invading Iraq, government documents show. . . . While Tony Blair described 'the oil conspiracy theory' as 'the most absurd.' "
19. Paul Bignell et al., "Iraqi Oil Supply Was Considered to Be 'Vital' to British Interests," *Independent,* April 19, 2011.
20. Bignell et al., "Iraqi Oil Supply."
21. Battle and Byrne, "Iraq War," document 8.
22. An Arab perspective on the decline of Arab nationalism is given by Adeed Dawisha in *Arab Nationalism in the 20th century: From Triumph to Despair* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).
23. Abdel Magid Farid, *Nasser: The Final Years* (Reading, UK: Ithaca, 1994), 69 ff. Farid was secretary of the Supreme Executive Committee, roughly Egypt's National Security Council, and took notes during the discussion. The notes are the substance of the book. They offer a remarkable insight into the thoughts and actions of the inner council of Egypt and of both the Soviet system and the several Arab governments at that critical time.

CHAPTER 31: IRAN, THE REVOLUTIONARY SHIAH MUSLIM STATE

1. Shiism (*Shiiyah*) is the name of the sect of which the Shii is a member. The adjective that designates the religion is Shiah.
2. The media is full of accounts of the clashes between the Sunni Saudi Arabian government and the Shiah Houthi of Yemen; the Saudi and Bahraini Sunni hostility to their domestic Shiah populations; the bitter civil war in Iraq between Sunnis and Shiis; and the turmoil in Lebanon among Christians, Sunnis, and a variety of Shiah splinter groups and offshoots. Because even self-proclaimed secular governments are still rooted in Islam, these divisions cannot be overlooked, just as even in modern Europe the divisions among Christians are still in play politically, socially, and culturally.
3. Zoroaster is referred to as Zarathustra in Friedrich Nietzsche's *Also Sprach Zarathustra* (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*) and Richard Strauss's tone poem with

the same title.

4. The shah never really understood—or at least thought he could suppress—the force of the religious establishment. As he once said to me, he regarded the Muslim clergy, including the ayatollahs, as just "dirty, lice-ridden mollas."
5. Over the years, the name would be changed to Anglo-Iranian Oil and then British Petroleum, but it was essentially the same company.
6. All these events were hidden behind security restrictions for years. Kermit Roosevelt wrote a censored version of them in *Countercoup: The Struggle for the Control of Iran* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1979). The official history was written by Donald M. Wilber as a training manual for CIA officers. It has been published as *Regime Change in Iran* (Nottingham, UK: Spokesman, 2006). The episode was also discussed by Mark J. Gasiorowski in "The 1953 Coup d'Etat in Iran," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 19, no. 3 (August 1987): 261–286, and by Stephen Kinzer in *All the Shah's Men* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and Sons, 2003). At long last, the National Security Archives of the American University has obtained most of the original documents, which it published: Mark J. Gasiorowski and Malcolm Byrne, eds., *Mohammad Mosaddeq and the 1953 Coup in Iran* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004). Montgomery Woodhouse published an account of his role, admitting that he covered up the real British purpose in the coup, in *Something Ventured* (London: Granada, 1982).
7. Ambassador William Sullivan to President Jimmy Carter, cable, November 2, 1978.
8. I should reveal that I had a complex relationship with the shah. I served as a member of the Iran Task Force that was urging the John F. Kennedy administration to use its influence to convince the shah to open his rule so that the Iranian people would have a reason to support his government. The secretary of state, the US ambassador to Iran, and the assistant secretary in charge of that area were all opposed to the proposals or even the existence of the task force. The shah was informed of my role, and when later I left government service he told me that he had been delighted by my departure. Being out of government and able to speak freely, I had a rather sharp and pointed argument with him in 1967 in which I told him I thought Iran was headed toward a revolution. He scoffed at this idea. I did not see him after 1968. Thereafter, the US government encouraged the very tendencies that led to the revolution.
9. Shortly after the death of President Kennedy, I was in Tehran and saw thousands of Iranians lined up day after day to sign the book of condolences at the American embassy.
10. This is the contention of Gary Sick in *October Surprise: America's Hostages in Iran and the Election of Ronald Reagan* (New York: Random House, 1991). The secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran, Ali Shamkhani, charged in January 2016 that a similar request had been made in November 1980 "by Republican rivals of the current US administration [the Carter administration] for a delay in prisoner repatriation until after the US presidential elections." "US Republicans Had Urged Iran to Delay Prisoner Swap, Shamkhani Says," *Tasnim News Agency* (Tehran), February 11, 2016.
11. Dexter Filkins, "The Shadow Commander," *New Yorker,* September 30, 2013.
12. The American government's analysis and supporting opinions of politicians

and scientists on the deal are given in Zach Gibson, “Obama Begins Campaign in Congress for Iran Nuclear Deal,” *New York Times,* August 4, 2015. The president briefed world leaders on the deal, its legacy, and the problems that remain on March 30 and 31, 2016, as reported by Carol E. Lee in the *Wall Street Journal* of April 1, 2016.

13. As the chief Iranian negotiator, Foreign Minister Zarif told me he faced strong opposition within the Iranian governing circles in his moves toward negotiation. He was dismissed from his post as ambassador to the UN in 2007. His return to government in 2013 and successful negotiation are, I believe, not only a sign of his goodwill but also an indication of the change in Iranian thinking. By the beginning of 2017, his position had become shaky as members of the Trump administration called for revision or abolition of the treaty.

CHAPTER 32: THE MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD

1. Al-Banna’s father was, by village standards, a learned man and raised his family in the strict Hanbali school (*madhhab*) of Islamic law, but, in the Egyptian fashion, he diluted Hanbalism with Sufism.
2. Reported by Ahmad Anwar al-Jundi in *Qaid al-Dawah* (Cairo, 1945), as quoted by Ishak Musa Husaini in *The Moslem Brethren* (Beirut: Khayat, 1956), 14.
3. When Richard Mitchell took me to visit the Cairo offices of the Brotherhood, they were virtually empty. One had the feeling that they were merely a symbolic presence, while serious activities were carried on elsewhere.
4. In Iraq it was banned by the government of Abd al-Karim Qasim in 1961 and in Syria it was banned by the Baath Party in 1963 but played a role in the Hama uprising against the government in 1982. The Kuwait organization, HADAS (Harakah al-Dusturiya al-Islamiyah), cut its ties with the Brotherhood when the Brotherhood supported Saddam Husain and opposed the American intervention to drive out the Iraqis.
5. It was to break into the cell structure of the FLN resistance in Algiers that the French used torture.
6. The assassin was never identified, but Mitchell told me that he was convinced that the killer was a government agent. The usual explanation was that the act was carried out to avenge the murder, by a known member of the Brotherhood, of the Egyptian prime minister. This probably is true but is only a partial explanation. The murder enabled the government to virtually cripple the organization with massive arrests and legal prohibitions. Subsequently, it was able even to choose or influence the choice of a man of the very sort al-Banna feared, a judge and respected member of the governing establishment.
7. As I pointed out earlier, the 1930s in Europe and Egypt might be called the era of the “shirts.” Benito Mussolini’s Italian Fascists, the English Fascists under Sir Oswald Mosey, and members of Betar, the Polish Jewish youth movement led by Menahem Begin, wore black shirts; Nazis wore brown shirts; American racists wore silver shirts; Mexican nationalists wore golden shirts; Irish nationalists and Spanish Falangists wore blue shirts; and Romanian Fascists wore green shirts. In Egypt, street gangs of the two prominent political parties were distinguished by the color of their shirts—the Wafd, the biggest party, by blue shirts and the ultra-rightist Young Egypt

party by green.

8. Hassan al-Banna, "Toward the Light," in *Five Tracts of Hassan al-Banna (1906–1949),* trans. Charles Wendell (Berkley: University of California Press, 1978), quoted in Carrie Rosefsky Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 23.
9. Wickham, *Muslim Brotherhood,* 24.
10. On the outreach of the Brotherhood, see Barry Rubin, ed., *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

CHAPTER 33: THE PHILOSOPHER OF THE MUSLIM REVOLT, SAYYID QUTB

1. Sayyid Qutb, *Tifl min al-Qarya,* translated by John Calvert and William Shepard as *A Child from the Village* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2004).
2. The leader of this school of thought was the Egyptian writer and statesman Taha Husain. Like Qutb, he wrote a charming account of his youth, *al-Ayam* (The days), which is one of the first texts students of Arabic read. His book *Mustaqbal al-Thaqafah Fi Misr* (*The Future of Culture in Egypt*) probably represents Qutb's way of thinking in this period of his life. It was translated by Sidney Glazer and published by the American Council of Learned Societies in 1954. As Qutb wrote in a periodical of the time about Egypt's relationship to the Arabs, it is the "big sister in the eyes of the [Middle Eastern] people. The Arab World follows Egypt's steps, benefits from her experiences, is illuminated by her light and regards her with love, wonder and expectation." Quoted and translated in John Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb and the Origins of Radical Islamism* (London: Hurst, 2010), 98.
3. Calvert, *Sayyid Qutb,* 103. When I arrived in Cairo as a very young student in the fall of 1946, I found that Egyptians fall into three groups: the wealthy, whose positions protected them from the common British soldier and threw them together socially together with the upper-class English; the intelligentsia, who smarted as did Qutb from their brushes with the English soldiers or at least observed their habits; and the common people, who, in the poorer district in which I lived, were fatalistic because the rich and powerful had always abused them. By luck, I met some members of the circle in which Qutb moved (but I did not meet him). Those I got to know had moved far to the left and talked endlessly about insults to pride. They regarded the contempt against which they reacted as a prime feature of imperialism.
4. When I first arrived in Baghdad in 1951 determined to write a study on political thought and met my first "informant," he asked me about baseball. I replied that I had not come to Baghdad to talk about baseball but to learn about Iraqi politics. He appeared to be astonished and remarked that, as a student in America, all his acquaintances talked about was baseball or football. He said he had never met an American who was interested in what Middle Easterners were thinking. He had found his time in America very lonely. That appears to have also been the experience of Qutb.
5. Quotations have been drawn from Sayyid Qutb's most influential book, apparently read by millions of Muslims all over the world, including in Shiah Iran, *Maalim fi al-Tariq,* translated as *Milestones.* A better translation of

the title would be *Waymarkers.* For convenience I have used the Islamic Book Service translation (New Delhi, 2002) in the 2015 (fourteenth) impression. This quote is from page 9. Qutb also wrote a number of *tafasir* (commentaries) on the Quran. Another work, *Al-adaliah al-Ijtimaiyah fi al-Islam,* translated into English as *Social Justice in Islam* (Washington, DC: American Council of Learned Societies, 1953), was the first of his works that caught attention in the West. It was translated with Qutb's cooperation before his execution.

6. Qutb, *Milestones,* 103–104.
7. Ibid., 13.
8. Ibid., 136.
9. Ibid., 138.
10. Ibid., 144. He cites Quran 3/169–171 and 3/196–198.
11. Qutb, *Milestones,* 124–125.
12. Ibid., 75–76.
13. Ibid., 61.
14. Ibid., 10.
15. Ibid., 18.
16. Ibid., 19.
17. Ibid., 36.
18. Mark 12:17; Mathew 22:21; Luke 20:25.
19. Qutb, *Milestones,* 9.
20. Sura 4/190–193, my translation.

CHAPTER 34: PALESTINE: WARS, DIASPORA, AND FAILED STATE

1. UN document A/SPC/9, February 11, 1957.
2. To get a sense of this, I spent two weeks in one of the refugee camps.
3. In Hebrew, Plan C was *Tochnit Gimel* and Plan D was *Tochnit Dale*. Plan D went into effect on March 10, 1948, two months before the end of the British mandate. As I have mentioned, although this was denied for many years, the Israeli expulsion of the Palestinian villagers has been fully recorded in official Israeli documents by two Israelis, the journalist Benny Morris in *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem, 1947–1949* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and the highly regarded Israeli historian Ilan Pappe in *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (London: Oneworld, 2006). Pappe's work is the more fully documented and is unflinching in its analysis; Morris, while sticking to the facts, came to believe that the Israeli action was justified. For an excellent account of Israel and the Arab world, see the work of one of the outstanding Israeli historians, Avi Shlaim, *The Iron Wall* (London: Penguin, 2000).
4. Morris, *Birth,* 63.
5. Pappe, *Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,* 21–22.
6. Morris, *Birth,* 76–77.
7. Pappe, *Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,* 100.
8. Morris, *Birth,* 113.
9. Pappe, *Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,* 90.
10. Ibid., xiii.

11. “Moshe Dayan’s Speech at the Technion,” *Haaretz,* April 4, 1969.The distinguished English journalist Michael Adams took a prewar map of Palestine and set out to find some of the biblical villages marked on it. He did not find the villages but found that Dayan was right, “these villages no longer exist.” Michael Adams, “Zeita . . . Beit Nuba . . . Yalu . . . and How the Israelis Have Erased Them from the Holy Land,” *Sunday Times* (London), June 16, 1968.
12. On the Israeli justification for the murder of the British representative during the Second World War, see Gerold Frank, *The Deed* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963). Bernadotte had been pushing for the plan to turn Jerusalem into an international city. On Shamir, see Julian Oanne’s obituary in the *Financial Times* of June 30, 2012.
13. We get some sense of the attitude toward the refugees then from what we see today in the attitudes toward the Syrian refugees pitifully and often tragically limping or swimming into the relatively rich countries of Europe. As the German chancellor said, Europe can afford them. Yet she endangered her position by her generosity. In Germany and throughout Europe, secure, prosperous people expressed great hostility to the refugees. In 1948, the Middle Eastern countries themselves were already “below the poverty line,” and many people regarded the Palestinians as dangerous and foreign intruders who would literally take food from the mouths of the natives. Many Europeans had expressed the same attitudes toward the Jewish displaced persons in 1945.
14. In 1963, the United Nations asked me to become deputy commissioner-general of the UNRWA to plan a “resolution” of the problem the refugees constituted. The secretary of state would not release me to do the job.
15. The definition of ethnic cleansing Pappe quotes (*Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,* 1) is from Drazen Petrovic, “Ethnic Cleansing—An Attempt at Methodology,” *European Journal of International Law* 5, no. 3 (1994): 342–360: “to systematically eliminate another group from a given territory on the basis of religious, ethnic or national origin” (351).
16. Morris, *Birth,* 85–86, quoting English officers who were eyewitnesses.
17. Quoted in Pappe, *Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine,* 6.
18. Uri Avnery, “The Other Gandhi,” Uri Avnery’s Column, Gush Shalom, April 23, 2016, http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/avnery/1461251372/.
19. *Fatah* is an acronym in reverse: *harakat al-tahrir al-watani al-filastini,* the Palestine National Liberation Movement. The word *fataha* in Arabic also means “to open” or “to conquer.”
20. As the French observer Gérard Chaliand wrote, “Between 1958 and 1962, Palestinians suspected of nationalism were refused permits [by Arab governments], so that they were unable to travel, and in certain Arab countries some were even imprisoned until 1967.” *The Palestinian Resistance* (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1972), 59.
21. Ibid., 57.
22. As the radical states’ leaders were told by their Soviet supporters, they had no capacity even to defend themselves, much less to retaliate for the Israeli attack. Marshal Andrei Grechko, the Soviet minister of defense, put it baldly: “Generally speaking the [Egyptian] army is currently able to defend only against small forces and not stand against a big offensive, and the air defence system for the major cities is still inadequate. This means that at

present the Egyptian army is not ready to take offensive action and not even for defence." Abdel Magid Farid, *Nasser: The Final Years* (Reading, UK: Ithaca, 1994), 36. The Soviet leaders portrayed themselves to Presidents Houari Boumedienne (of Algeria) and Abd al-Salam Arif (of Iraq) as members of the South, despite their record of imperialism in Central Asia; Boumedienne and Arif were openly skeptical, as they subsequently reported to Nasser. Minutes of the meeting were reported in Farid's account. Farid was the secretary-general of the Egyptian presidency and took the minutes of the meetings.

23. Helena Cobban, *The Palestinian Liberation Organisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 24.
24. Farid, *Nasser,* 101. This is his verbatim account.
25. Ibid., 96.
26. Ibid., 36.
27. I have not dealt with them here because, while they were occasionally spectacular, I think they were largely irrelevant. I have discussed them in detail elsewhere.
28. Some of the groups had less than a score or so of members. They merged and sundered with bewildering speed. A few numbered in the hundreds or, perhaps, thousands. One, al-Saiqa, was more or less a creature of Syrian intelligence; the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine was a partial merger of three smaller groups, each of which acted as it chose. Some were Christians (like George Habbash of the PFLP) and others, like Ahmad Jabril, Muslim.
29. This led to an American law case in which the airline companies sued their insurers, whose "small print" clauses minimized compensation if the attack was by a "nation" rather than just a terrorist group. In the trial, I was the expert witness on one side, while the brilliant French journalist Eric Rouleau of *Le Monde* was the expert witness on the other side of the question.
30. Meron Benvenisti, "The Turning Point in Israel," *New York Review of Books,* October 13, 1983.
31. The full text was published as a press bulletin in Jerusalem on December 15, 1981, and was summarized by Richard G. Neumann in "Assad and the Future of the Middle East," *Foreign Affairs* 62 (1983): 237 ff. Also see Oded Yinon, "A Strategy for Israel in the 1980s" [in Hebrew], *Kivunim,* February 1982. Yinon was formerly a senior officer in the Israeli Foreign Ministry. His article was translated and published by Israel Shahak as "The Zionist Plan for the Middle East," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 44–45 (Summer/Fall 1982): 209–214.
32. While a member of the Policy Planning Council, I helped to write the Kennedy administration national security policy paper in 1963 and was in charge of writing the subsidiary papers on the Middle East and Africa. While they were not binding, such papers set out the intent of the government. The George W. Bush administration *National Security Strategy* paper was published in Washington, DC, in September 2002, and the comparable paper of the Barack Obama administration was published in Washington, DC, in February 2015.
33. One account of the massacre is by the American journalist Thomas L. Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem* (New York: Doubleday, Anchor, 1989), 161. On December 16, 1982, the UN General Assembly, by a vote of 123 to 0 (with 34 not voting), declared the massacre "genocide." Sharon was

censured both by the Israeli Kahan commission and by an international commission of jurists headed by Seán MacBride of Ireland. Prime Minister Menachem Begin removed Sharon as minister of defense but left him in the cabinet. He later became prime minister.

34. Friedman, *From Beirut to Jerusalem,* 159.
35. The PLO got at least some of the archives back in a later prisoner exchange.

CHAPTER 35: HIZBULLAH, STATELESS NATION

1. Shiah Islam, as I have explained, is an esoteric faith that, among other beliefs, differentiates itself by reference to the principal descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. The Zaidis (who now include the Houtis of Yemen and the Shiis of Bahrain) recognize only the first five of the imams; the Ismailis recognize seven, ending with Ismail, the seventh imam. The Ismailis founded the great medieval caliphate of Fatimid Egypt and today are prominent in Pakistan and Tajikistan; they are best known as followers of the Aga Khan. The largest group, the "Twelvers," recognize all twelve of the Shiah imams, ending with Muhammad al-Mahdi. The Twelvers believe that al-Mahdi did not actually die but instead has been preserved by God, much as Christians believe about Jesus, and will return on Judgment Day. The Wahhabis and other fundamentalist Sunnis regard all Shiis as heretics.
2. Both were brilliant social scientists. Emrys Peters became professor of social anthropology at the University of Manchester. To them and to their teacher and my friend Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard I owe a great deal in my own approach to history.
3. The name comes from Quran 5/56, "For him who unites himself with God and His Messenger and those who believe, then verily [as] The Party of God, they are the victorious."
4. While there is no exact equivalent to an ayatollah in Sunnism, or in the Western world, two institutions deal in part in similar activities: the grand mufti of the Azhar theological university in Cairo, who issues decisions (fatwas) on religious issues, and the ecumenical councils of the Catholic Church, such as the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s, that advise the pope on church affairs.
5. In Arabic, the Movement of the Deprived is called Harakah al-Mahrumiyin. The name Amal is both an acronym (for *afwaj al-qawmiyah al-Lubnaniyah*) and the Arabic word meaning "hope."
6. Astonishingly, he got an Alawi cleric appointed to a religious position within the Shiah community. This was an unprecedented move toward unity between communities always known for their moves apart.
7. Fouad Ajami, *The Vanished Imam* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 104.
8. It may have been his attempt to secure financial support from the Libyan leader Muammar al-Qaddafi that led to his "disappearance" in August 1978. His murder, as seems nearly certain to have occurred, has not been conclusively solved. On the speculation, see Giles Trendle, "The Imam and the Colonel," *Al Jazeera,* July 24, 2012, and Franklin Lamb, "Does Lebanon Really Want to Solve the Imam Musa Sadr Mystery?," *Counterpunch,* November 16, 2012.
9. David K. Shipler, "Lebanese Tell of Anguish of Living under the P.LO.," *International New York Times,* July 25, 1982.

10. Kenneth Freed, " 'Let Them Fight Elsewhere': Shias Try to Drive Out PLO to Avert Israeli Retaliation," *Los Angeles Times,* May 28, 1985.
11. The Lebanese government actually paid the salaries and other benefits for the members of the South Lebanon Army until 1979 when the commander, a Lebanese army officer, proclaimed the area under its control to be "Independent Free Lebanon." The Lebanese government then proclaimed the members to be traitors. Meanwhile, Israel supplied the "army" with tanks, heavy artillery, and even uniforms. When Israel withdrew support for them, the Lebanese government arrested and tried for treason some nine hundred of those it could catch. Israel accepted a number of those who managed to escape and set up in Jerusalem a government in exile.
12. Casey Addis and Christopher M. Blanchard, *Hezbollah: Background and Issues for Congress,* report no. R41446 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, January 3, 2011), 11.
13. Ibid., 3.
14. There is an already enormous and growing library dealing with American and Israeli terrorism. One could begin with Bob Woodward's *Veil: The Secret Wars of the C.I.A., 1981–1987* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988); Jane Mayer's *The Dark Side* (New York: Doubleday, 2008); Jeremy Scahill's *Dirty Wars* (New York: Nation Books, 2013); and Ami Pedahzur and Arie Perliger's *Jewish Terrorism in Israel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009). As the reader will find later in this book, my aim is to show how we all can move beyond this wasteful, inefficient, and ugly activity.
15. During the French mandate, a census was taken and seats in Parliament were allocated on what the French called a "confessional" or religious membership basis. The number of Shiis has dramatically increased (to 1.2 million out of a total population of 3.5 million), while the Sunni population stands at 700,000 and the Maronite population is only 660,000. Reallocation will sooner or later be required if the country is to be held together under a reasonably proportional representative democracy. Figures cited in Alfred B. Prados, *Lebanon,* report no. RL33509 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, updated November 23, 2007).

CHAPTER 36: GAZA AND HAMAS

1. Hamas is an acronym for the Arabic Harakat al-Muqawamiyah al-Islamiyah, the Islamic National Movement.
2. David Blair, "Israel Carves Out 'Dead Zone' along Gaza Borders," *Telegraph,* July 24, 2014.
3. Mel Fryberg, "How Israel's Naval Blockade Denies Gazans Food, Aid," *Christian Science Monitor,* July 1, 2009.
4. "Gaza Closure: Not Another Year!," International Committee of the Red Cross, June 14, 2010, https://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/update/palestine-update-140610.htm.
5. Violeta Santos-Moura, "The Last Seamen of Gaza," *Foreign Affairs,* August 12, 2015. In April 2016, Israel moved the exclusion zone closer to shore, but there is no assurance on where it will be in the future. Nidal Almughrabi, "Israel Allows Gaza Fishermen More Maritime Space: Fishing Zone Extended from Six Nautical Miles to Nine along Gaza's Central and Southern Shores," *Haaretz*, April 3, 2016.
6. One of the leaders of Hamas, Palestinian prime minister Haniyah, whom

Abbas had dismissed when he dissolved Parliament but who remained in control of Gaza, rejected the conference entirely. “Palestinian Territories—Timeline,” *BBC News,* October 6, 2007. The Shas Party withdrew from the Israeli government coalition. Olmert was also attacked by the Yesha Rabbis Council, a powerful right-wing group. Kobi Nahshoni, “Rabbi: Cleanse Country of Arabs,” *Ynetnews.com,* November 27, 2007, http://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-3476150,00.html.

7. *The Palestine Papers,* more than 1,600 documents showing plans to overthrow the parliamentary government, were leaked. Greg Carlstrom, “Introducing the Palestine Papers,” *Al Jazeera,* January 23, 2011; Seumas Milne and Ian Back, “The Story behind the Palestine Papers,” *Guardian,* January 24, 2011. Ziyad Clot revealed his role in leaking the papers in “Why I Blew the Whistle about Palestine,” *Guardian,* May 14, 2011.
8. Ziyad Clot, *Il n’y aura pas d’état palestinien* (Paris: Max Milo Éditions, 2010).
9. Tunnels were originally dug to enable Gazans to import desperately needed food, supplies, and other goods and to export products. They became quite elaborate and were ultimately used by the paramilitary force of Hamas, Izz al-Din al-Qasim fighting groups, to smuggle terrorists into Israel and to move rockets into firing positions. On what Israel found during its invasion, see Harriet Sherwood, “Inside the Tunnels Hamas Built: Israel’s Struggle against New Tactic in Gaza War,” *Guardian,* August 2, 2014; Jim Zanotti et al., *Israel and Hamas: Conflict in Gaza,* report no. R40101 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, February 19, 2009); and Hayes Brown, “What You Need to Know about the Tunnels That Bring Life—and Death—into Gaza,” *Thinkprogress,* July 18, 2014.
10. Chris Gunness of the UN Relief and Works Agency told Sky News that hundreds of people were taking refuge inside the UN compound when it was hit by “three white phosphorus” shells. “UN Outraged as Its Gaza HQ Is Hit,” *Sky News,* January 16, 2009. Also see Rory McCarthy, “Israel Accused of Indiscriminate Phosphorus Use in Gaza,” *Guardian,* March 25, 2009. McCarthy cities a Human Rights Watch report maintaining that “in Gaza, the Israeli . . . fired white phosphorus repeatedly over densely populated areas, even when its troops weren’t in the area and safe smoke shells were available.”
11. “Israel Used Illegal Weapons in Gaza,” *Middle East Monitor,* July 21, 2014, quoting Norwegian doctor Mads Gilbert at one of the Gaza hospitals.
12. Adam Withnall, “Israel-Gaza Conflict: Deadly Flechette Shells ‘Used by Israeli Military in Gaza Strip,’ ” *Independent on Sunday,* July 20, 2014; Harriet Sherwood, “Israel Using Flechette Shells in Gaza,” *Guardian,* July 20, 2014. The quotation is from Rania Khalek, “Israel Firing Experimental Weapons at Gaza’s Civilians, Say Doctors,” *Electronic Intifada,* July 15, 2014. Gaza’s undersecretary of health Youssef Abu al-Resh told a press conference on July 13, 2014, that “Gaza hospitals are bursting at the seams with dead and wounded [from the effects of DIME].” Saed Bannoura, “Doctor in Gaza Reports Injuries Indicating Israeli Use of Banned Weapons,” *IMEMC News,* July 13, 2014. DIME is an internationally banned weapon. Israel denied using it in Gaza.
13. Conal Urquhart, “Judge Goldstone Expresses Regrets about His Report into Gaza War,” *Guardian,* April 3, 2011.
14. “Gaza Investigators Call for War Crimes Inquiry,” Amnesty International, March 16, 2009.
15. UN Human Rights Council, *The Goldstone Report—Report of the United*

Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict ([Geneva]: United Nations, 2009), paragraphs 74, 75.

16. See Urquhart, "Judge Goldstone Expresses Regrets." The Associated Press reported from Jerusalem on April 5 that "Richard Goldstone has accepted invitation to Israel and agreed to try to nullify UN report on Gaza conflict, says interior minister." "Judge Goldstone to Visit Israel, Says Minister," *Guardian,* April 5, 2011. Jim Zanotti, *Hamas* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, December 2, 2010), 38, reported that "on November 3, 2009, the House of Representatives passed H.Res. 867 ('Calling on the President and the Secretary of State to oppose unequivocally any endorsement or further consideration of the "Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict" ') by a vote of 344–36 (with 22 voting 'present')." On Tutu's reaction, see his foreword to Adam Horowitz, Lizzy Ratner, and Philip Weiss, eds., *The Goldstone Report* (New York: Nation Books, 2011).
17. Harriet Sherwood, "Gaza Becoming Uninhabitable, as Blockade Tightens, Says UN," *Guardian,* November 22, 2013, drawing on reports from UNRWA commissioner-general Filippo Grandi and Oxfam's local representative Nashant Pandey.
18. Harriet Sherwood, "Gaza's Only Power Plant Destroyed in Israel's Most Intense Air Strike Yet," *Guardian,* July 30, 2014.
19. World Bank, "Gaza Economy on the Verge of Collapse, Youth Unemployment Highest in the Region at 60 Percent," May 21, 2015, submitted to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee as World Bank document 96601, dated May 27, 2015.
20. "Restricted Movement in the Occupied Palestinian Territory," American Friends Service Committee, accessed April 19, 2017, https://www.afsc.org/resource/restricted-movement-occupied-palestinian-territory.
21. Nisreen El-Shamayleh, "UN Says Gaza Deaths Have 'Shamed the World,' " *Al Jazeera,* August 7, 2014. Also see Barak Ravid and Jack Houry, "UN Chief: Gaza Destruction 'beyond Description,' Worse than Last War," *Haaretz,* February 17, 2016.
22. Mouin Rabbani, "Israel Mows the Lawn," *London Review of Books,* July 31, 2014.
23. Ibid.
24. I have yet to see a satisfactory account of the life and thought of Ahmad Yasin. The Palestinian English journalist Zaki Chehab offers personal insights in his *Inside HAMAS* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2007), 103 ff.
25. "The Life and Death of Shaikh Yasin," *Al Jazeera,* March 24, 2004. The article points out that Yasin's birthplace "was bulldozed along with nearly 500 other Palestinian towns and villages in 1948, following the occupation of Palestine." The implication is that, as with many Palestinians, his earliest memories were swept away by Israeli action. Bitterness over this act must have played a part in his later anger.
26. Andrew Higgins, "How Israel Helped to Spawn HAMAS," *Wall Street Journal,* January 24, 2009.
27. The Arabic word for martyr, *shahid,* means "witness." Martyrs give their lives in testimony to the existence of God. The first obligation of Muslims is to repeat the phrase "I give witness . . ." (aSH-Ha-Du). So martyrs do with their bodies what Muslims say in their prayer. It is, for Muslims, a very powerful expression.

28. "Shaikh Yasin," *Al Jazeera*. The article quotes the responses of the Israelis, various Arab leaders, European Union leaders, and officials of the US government. Also see Uri Avnery, "Rejoice Not," Uri Avnery's Column, Gush Shalom, May 7, 2011, http://zope.gush-shalom.org/home/en/channels/avnery/archives_article330. Avnery compares the British extrajudicial killing of the Israeli terrorist Avraham Stern with the killing of Ahmad Yasin.
29. Alan Cowell, "The Daring Attack That Blew Up in Israel's Face," *New York Times,* October 15, 1997.
30. Joel Greenberg, "Hamas Leader Khaled Meshal Says Group Will Never Recognize Israel," *Washington Post,* December 8, 2012.
31. Tamar Pileggi and *Times of Israel* Staff, "Israel's Top Diplomat Tells Colleagues 'Entire Land Is Ours,' " *Times of Israel,* May 21, 2015.

CHAPTER 37: THE UYGHURS AND CHINESE ISLAM

1. Quoted in Ying-shih Yü, *Trade and Expansion in Han China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 40.
2. The Xiongnu or Hsiung-nu sound no note in Western history, but they, their ancestors, and their descendants were the people who set in motion the great tribal retreats from Asia that became the barbarian invasions of Europe. They were the cause of actions that would ultimately destroy ancient societies in India, the Middle East, and Europe. Denis Sinor, "The Hun Period," in *The Cambridge History of Early Inner Asia,* ed. Denis Sinor (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 177.
3. Sima Qian, *Shi ji,* translated by Burton Watson as *Records of the Grand Historian,* rev. ed. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 1:304.
4. The acquisition of horses was one reason for the first Chinese diplomatic mission to Central Asia. And, as late as the eighteenth century, Indian princes were importing as many as fifty thousand horses yearly. Jos Gomman, *The Rise of the Indo-Afghan Empire* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1995), 89; Scott C. Levi, "The Ferghana Valley at the Crossroads of World History: The Rise of Khoqand, 1709–1822," *Journal of Global History* 2 (2007): 218.
5. As archaeologists began to discover in the nineteenth century, the movement of Buddhists into Central Asia had been on a remarkable scale in ancient times. Many Buddhist monks spent their lives there. And the great tribal eighteenth-century confederation of the Zunghars was Buddhist.
6. On the growth of trade and the changes in tastes, see Edward H. Schafer, *The Golden Peaches of Samarkand* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963). This and other interests tied the Chinese to Central Asia, through which the Great Silk Road ran.
7. "Yedişehir" is one of several terms that crop up in the literature. Another is "Sart," which the local people thought insulting; some regarded it as having the connotation of the derogatory English word "nigger," which the English often used for Indians. The Chinese used a similar derogatory expression, rather like the American soldiers' word for Muslims, "rag head." They called the Central Asian Muslims "turbaned heads." The Chinese word was *ch'an-t'ou*. As Owen Lattimore wrote, "there was for centuries no 'national' name for them; people identified themselves with the oasis they came from, like Kashgar or Turfan." Owen Lattimore, "Return to China's Northern Frontier," *Geographical Journal* 139, no. 2 (1973): 235. Uyghur was adopted by the 1921 Tashkent conference of Central Asian Muslims as the name for people

from the Seven Cities. It had previously been used as the name of a small discussion club.

8. M. Romanovski, *Notes on the Central Asian Question* (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing, 1870), 6. He was commenting on the khanates of Khiva, Bukhara, and Khoqand, but what he wrote was also true of the Seven Cities of the Tarim Basin.
9. This system of *qanats,* tunnels that gently sloped from a water source to agricultural areas, was employed in Iran and in Xinjiang under the name *karez.* Stanley W. Toops, "The Ecology of Xinjiang: A Focus on Water," in *Xinjiang: China's Muslim Borderland,* ed. S. Frederick Starr (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2004), 273. The qanat or karez enabled cities to prosper far from sources of water in an age before steel pipes were available.
10. James A. Millward and Peter C. Perdue, "Political and Cultural History of the Xinjiang Region through the Late Nineteenth Century," in Starr, *Xinjiang,* 41.
11. Levi, "Ferghana Valley," 223.
12. Lien-sheng Yang, "Historical Notes on the Chinese World Order," in *The Chinese World Order,* ed. John King Fairbank (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), 27.
13. Joseph F. Fletcher, "China and Central Asia," in Fairbank, *Chinese World Order,* 207–208.
14. Ibid., 210–211.
15. Quoted and translated in Yang, "Historical Notes," 31.
16. The Qing Qianlong emperor, who ruled from 1736 to 1795, was able to get even Tashkent, which later passed under Russian imperial rule, to accept tribute status.
17. Millward and Perdue, "Xinjiang Region," 58–62. Various ethnic non-Han but religiously Muslim minority groups were known as Huihui, Tungans, or Dungans.
18. See Hodong Kim, *Holy War in China: The Muslim Rebellion and State in Chinese Central Asia, 1864–1877* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004).
19. The text is given in ibid., appendix A. The moves the Russians made toward easing relations did not solve the problems between the Russians and Yaqub. Neither trusted the other. The Russians so feared that Yaqub would move into "their" area north of the Tienshan that they flirted with the idea of proposing to the Chinese a joint campaign against him. They acted on their own to solidify their positions above the Tienshan but moved cautiously toward the treaty that eventuated in 1872.
20. Letter of September 26, 1780, quoted in Lewis Namier, "King George III: A Study of Personality," in *Personalities and Powers* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955), 45.
21. Technically, the agreement was between the viceroy of India and the ruler of "the territory of Kashghar and Yarkand," but in form and tone it was far more diplomatic a document than the one the Russians had signed. Yaqub was addressed as "His highness the Ameer Mahomed Yakoob Khan." The British had learned in India how to flatter those they wished to control. The world "Khan" was the highest title a Central Asian could hold; it was a token left behind by the greatest of the khans, Genghis. The text of the treaty is given in Kim, *Holy War in China,* appendix B.
22. Michael E. Clarke, *Xinjiang and China's Rise in Central Asia* (Abingdon, UK:

Routledge, 2011), 26.

23. Kim, *Holy War in China,* 184–185.
24. Romanovski, *Central Asian Question,* 9.
25. Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia* (Boston: Little Brown, 1950), 3.
26. He had studied Arabic, Turkish, and Islam in Kazan (as I did in Oxford) and may be taken as the prime example of Edward Said's strictures on orientalism. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1978).
27. Adeeb Khalid, *The Politics of Muslim Cultural Reform: Jadidism in Central Asia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 109.
28. Justin Rudelson and William Jankowiak, "Acculturation and Resistance: Xinjiang Identities in Flux," in Starr, *Xinjiang,* 305–306.
29. Ibid., 307.
30. Ibid.
31. David Brophy, *Uyghur Nation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 275.
32. Graham E. Fuller and Jonathan N. Lipman, "Islam in Xinjiang," in Starr, *Xinjiang,* 323.

CHAPTER 38: THE MORO "REBELLION" IN THE PHILIPPINES

1. As the Lebanese American medical doctor and ethnographer Najeeb Saleeby wrote in *Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1905), 50, "The large majority of the Moro sultanates are, however, small, and have never been fully numbered or described. They generally represent small divisions of territory and subdivisions of tribes, each under one chief who calls himself sultan or datum."
2. The text is given in Najeeb Saleeby, *The History of Sulu* (Manila: Bureau of Public Printing, 1908), 194 ff.
3. I have used the third edition (London: HMSO, 1906), which was reprinted in photo offset with an introduction by Douglas Porch, professor of strategy at the Naval War College: Charles E. Callwell, *Small Wars: The Principles and Practices* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1996), 128–129, 132, 145.
4. Henry F. Graff, ed., *American Imperialism and the Philippine Insurrection: Selections from Congressional Hearings* (Boston: Little Brown, 1969), 64–65.
5. Stuart Creighton Miller, "The American S0ldier and the Conquest of the Philippines," in *Reappraising an Empire: New Perspectives on Philippine-American History,* ed. Peter W. Stanley (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 31–32.
6. A popular account is Victor Hurley's *Swish of the Kris* (New York: Dutton, 1936).
7. Officers found that their side arms, .38-caliber pistols, did not stop the charge of a suicide warrior and demanded a heavier weapon. That was the origin of the .45-caliber pistol that Americans used for the next century.
8. Herbert Docena, "Moro National Liberation," in *The International Encyclopedia of Revolution and Protest,* ed. Immanuel Ness (Oxford: Blackwell, 2009). Also see Thomas McKenna, *Muslim Rulers and Rebels: Everyday Politics and Armed Separatism in the Southern Philippines* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).
9. The term was coined by Chief Justice John Marshall in his 1831 decision on *Cherokee Nation v. Georgia.*

10. Saleeby, *Studies*, 63 ff.
11. Ibid., 64.
12. *Datu* was the common term for the leader of a single tribal or district unit.
13. Najeeb Saleeby, *The Moro Problem: An Academic Discussion of the History and Solution of the Problem of the Government of the Moros of the Phillipine [sic] Islands,* 1913, in "The United States and Its Territories, 1870–1925: The Age of Imperialism," Collection on Southeast Asia, University of Michigan Library, Ann Arbor.
14. Lumad is the name given to non-Muslim native peoples, more or less the equivalent in the Philippines of the term used in America to refer to the Indian people, "Native Americans."
15. "Who Are the Moro People?," *Philippine Daily Inquirer,* October 20, 2012.
16. Docena, "Moro National Liberation," 2.
17. On the Hukbalahop movement, see Benedict J. Kerkvliet, *The Huk Rebellion* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002). Further information on the insurgencies against the Spanish, the Japanese, the Americans, and the Philippine government is given in William R. Polk, "The Philippine 'Insurrection," ch. 3 of *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007).
18. The Japanese performed vivisections on captured guerrillas. Richard Lloyd Parry, "Dissect Them Alive: Chilling Imperial Order That Could Not Be Denied," *Australian,* February 26, 2007.
19. The Arabic name for the MNLF was Jabhat Tahrir Muru al-Muqawamiyah.
20. In Arabic, Jabhat Tahrir Muru al-Islamiyah.
21. "Fruits of Peace," *Economist,* October 17, 2015.

CHAPTER 39: SOMALIA, THE "FAILED STATE"

1. Richard Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa* (London, 1856), https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/b/burton/richard/b97f/index.html.
2. "Ten Days at Harar," in ibid., ch. 8. Also typical of Burton, he described (in Latin to avoid English censorship) some of the sexual habits of the people and remarked, as most travelers have, on the beauty of the Somali women.
3. The Usba al-Shabiyah al-Sumaliyad.
4. Christopher Clapham, *The Horn of Africa* (London: Hurst, 2017), 60.
5. Paul Salopek, " 'Nobody Is Watching' America's Hidden War in Somalia," *Chicago Tribune,* November 24, 2008.
6. Stig Jarle Hansen, *Al-Sahaab in Somalia: The History and Ideology of a Militant Islamist Group* (London: Hurst, 2013), 23.
7. Jeffrey Gettleman, "In Ethiopia, Fear and Cries of Army Brutality," *New York Times,* June 18, 2007.
8. The full Arabic name for the movement is Harakah al-Shabab al-Mujahidin. On it, see Hansen, *Al-Sahaab in Somalia*.
9. Mark Mazzetti, "Pentagon Sees Covert Move in Somalia as Blueprint," *International Herald Tribune,* January 13, 2007.
10. A summary of the failures is given by Ken Menkhaus and Karin von Hippel in their Op-Ed, "Republic of Blowback," *International Herald Tribune,* September 3, 2008.
11. Jeffrey Gettleman, "The Pirates Are Winning!," *New York Review of Books,* October 14, 2010.

12. Such protection as was forthcoming was mainly provided by nongovernmental organizations, of which the most famous is Sea Shepherd, which chases down and publicizes illegal fishing. See Ian Urbina, "Hunting Down a Fish Poacher," *International New York Times,* July 28, 2015.

CHAPTER 40: BOKO HARAM AND NIGERIA

1. A useful chronology is given in Manuel Reinert and Lou Garçon, "Boko Haram: A Chronology," in *Boko Haram: Islamism, Politics, Security and the State in Nigeria,* ed. Marc-Antoine Pérouse de Montclos (Leiden: African Studies Centre; Ibadan: Institut Francais de Recherche en Africa, 2014).
2. A new book by Vincent Hiribarren, *A History of Borno* (London: Hurst, 2017), has just appeared on this fascinating kingdom.
3. Dixon Denham, Hugh Clapperton, and Walter Oudney, *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa in the Years 1822, 1823, and 1824* (Boston: Cummings, Hilliards, 1826), 248.
4. Some of the residual rights it had acquired are still held by the Unilever Company.
5. *The World Factbook* (Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, January 2017), s.v. "Nigeria." The World Bank reports different statistics but points out that the poverty levels in the northern areas are three to four times those of the south and are increasing. World Bank, *Nigeria Economic Report,* no. 2 (Washington, DC: World Bank Group, July 2, 2014).
6. US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2015: Nigeria* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 2015).
7. US Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report, 2015* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2015), 1.
8. The corruption was described by the English prime minister to Queen Elizabeth II. See Anushka Asthana and Jamie Grierson, "Afghanistan and Nigeria 'Possibly Most Corrupt Countries,' Cameron Lets Slip," *Guardian,* May 10, 2016. The next day, Nigerian president Muhammadu Buhari was to deliver the keynote address to the "anti-corruption summit." On the money stolen by Nigeria's leaders, see Alex Perry, "A Failure of Democracy in Nigeria," *Time,* April 23, 2007.
9. Quoted by Rita Okoye, "Nigeria Has Lost $400bn Oil Revenue to Corruption since Independence—Ezekwesili," *Nigerian Daily Post,* August 31, 2012.
10. The elections " 'cannot be considered to have been credible,' said Max van den Berg, chief election monitor for the European Union." A local group of monitors called the elections a "charade." Perry, "Failure of Democracy."
11. US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, *Nigeria 2012 Human Rights Report* (Washington, DC: US Department of State, 2012). Also see Amnesty International, *Killing at Will: Extrajudicial Executions and Other Unlawful Killings by the Police in Nigeria* (London: Amnesty International, 2009).
12. US Department of State, *Nigeria 2012 Human Rights Report,* 1.
13. The most recent books are by Virginia Comolli, *Boko Haram: Nigeria's Islamist Insurgency* (London: Hurst, 2015), and Mike Smith, *Boko Haram: Inside Nigeria's Unholy War* (London: Tauris, 2015).

14. Andrew Walker, *What Is Boko Haram?* (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, June 2012).
15. Arabic as used by Muslims of Nigeria: Jamat Ahl al-Sunah Li al-Dawah wa al-Jihad. Having subsequently affiliated themselves with the Islamic caliphate or the Islamic State, they have taken the name the Islamic Province of West Africa, Al-Wilayah al-Islamiyah Gharb Afriqiyah.
16. Walker, *What Is Boko Haram?,* 5. Also see David Blair, "Boko Haram Is Now a Mini-Islamic State, with Its Own Territory," *Telegraph,* January 10, 2015.
17. This and the following details are drawn from Ahmad Mutada, *Boko Haram* (Kano, Nigeria: Salafi Manhaj, 2013), 6, http://download.salafimanhaj.com/pdf/SalafiManhaj_BokoHaram.pdf. Dr. Mutada, of the Islamic Studies Department of Bayero University in Kano, northern Nigeria, worked from recordings of statements by the leaders of the movement to produce his account.
18. The confrontation was over a traffic dispute that is described by Andrew Walker, who was then a reporter for a Nigerian newspaper and was working on the story. His account is in *"Eat the Heart of the Infidel"* (London: Hurst, 2016), 136 ff.
19. Quoted in Mutada, *Boko Haram,* 8.
20. Smith, *Boko Haram,* 97–98.
21. David Cook, "The Rise of Boko Haram in Nigeria," *CTC Sentinel,* September 26, 2011.
22. "Nigeria: Deaths of Hundreds of Boko Haram Suspects in Custody Requires Investigation," Amnesty International, October 15, 2013.
23. "Is Nigeria 'Fantastically Corrupt', as [Prime Minister David] Cameron Claims?," *BBC News,* May 11, 2016.
24. Human Rights Watch, *Spiraling Violence: Boko Haram Attacks and Security Force Abuses in Nigeria* (New York: Human Rights Watch, October 11, 2012); Amnesty International, *Nigeria: Trapped in the Cycle of Violence* (London: Amnesty International, November 1, 2012).
25. Mannir Dan Ali, "Letter from Africa: Nigeria's Boko Haram Wounds Army's Pride," *BBC News,* May 10, 2016. Ali is editor of Nigeria's *Daily Trust Newspaper*.
26. Emele Onu, "Amnesty Says 'Gruesome' Nigerian Footage Shows War Crimes," *Bloomberg,* August 5, 2014.
27. The US government considers it one of the deadliest terrorist groups in the world, having killed more than five thousand people and displaced more than three hundred thousand people in a "wide range of targets." Lauren P. Blanchard, *Nigeria's Boko Haram: Frequently Asked Questions* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, June 10, 2014).
28. For the complex problems of a return to her town after the abduction and her "marriage," see Alastair Leithead, "Boko Haram Abductions: Freed 'Bride' Tells of Stigma Ordeal," *BBC News,* April 14, 2016. Also see Elizabeth McLaughlin, "Kidnapped Chibok School Girls Now Fighting for Boko Haram, Former Captive Says," *ABC News,* September 16, 2015, and "Nigerian Army Frees Hundreds More Women and Girls from Boko Haram," *Guardian,* May 2, 2015.
29. BBC Monitoring, "Is Islamic State Shaping Boko Haram Media?," *BBC News,* March 4, 2015.
30. The popular Nigerian commentator Aliyu U. Tilde felt compelled to define

boko for his readers and decided that it meant “fake,” “backward,” or “stupid.” Listing all of the characteristics of Nigerians he did not like, he concluded “we are all *Boko Haram.*” Discourse 261 (unpublished, undated manuscript).

31. As the BBC reported, the term was first used to describe the secular and alien education the British school system enforced on the caliphate from 1903. “Nigeria: Boko Haram Now Major Threat Says Wole Soyinka,” *BBC News,* May 2, 2014.
32. The group, known as the True Muslim Supporters (of Islam) in Black African Lands, set out to establish contacts with al-Qaida. Little is so far known of it. One Nigerian account is in the Lagos newspaper *La Vanguard,* but it is now three years old. A man described as the group’s leader, Khalid al-Barnawi, is said to have been arrested by the Nigerian police in April 2016. “Khalid al-Barnawi: Nigeria Islamist Group Head ‘Arrested,’ ” *BBC News,* April 3, 2016. Also see especially Kyari Mohammed, “The Message and Methods of Boko Haram,” in Pérouse de Montclos, *Boko Haram,* 30 ff. The best recent account is Comolli, *Boko Haram.*
33. Vincent Foucher, “Boko Haram Is Losing Ground—but Will Not Be Defeated by Weapons Alone,” *Guardian,* May 13, 2016.
34. David Smith, “South Africa’s Ageing White Mercenaries Who Helped Turn Tide on Boko Haram,” *Guardian,* April 14, 2015; Ed Cropley and David Lewis, “Nigeria Drafts in Foreign Mercenaries to Take on Boko Haram,” Reuters, March 12, 2015; “France, African States Declare War on Boko Haram,” *Haaretz,* May 18, 2014; Andrew Tilghman, “U.S. Troops Likely Headed to Nigeria for Boko Haram Advisory Mission,” *Military Times,* February 6, 2016; Eric Schmitt and Dionne Searcey, “U.S. Plans to Put Advisers on Front Lines of Nigeria’s War on Boko Haram,” *New York Times,* February 25, 2016; “Nigeria’s Boko Haram Leader Abubakar Shekau in Profile,” *BBC News,* May 9, 2014.

CHAPTER 41: USAMA BIN LADIN AND AL-QAIDA

1. The Hadhramautis, like the Lebanese, are famous as migrants. They are to be found all around the Indian Ocean just as the Lebanese are to be found around the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. The Hadhramaut figures in the legends of both the Old Testament and the Quran. In the Quran it is said to have been populated by one of the peoples destroyed by God for impiety, the people of Thamud, who refused to accept the Prophet Salih.
2. A personal note: it was just at that point that I first visited Arabia. I was escorted to visit the king in a huge audience hall that the Bin Ladin group had built. Outside, the temperature hovered around one hundred degrees, but, inside the hall, a dozen enormous air conditioners spaced along the walls reduced the temperature to near freezing. For me, the cold was an almost painful shock, but for tribesmen who had come to pay their respects to the new king, it was a sign of his power. I think it was just this kind of shrewd insight into the psychology of his sponsors that made Muhammad bin Ladin’s fortune.
3. Alawis constitute one of the ethnic or religious groups that over the millennia have sought refuge in the Levant. They are close to Shiah Islam but have maintained their separate status. The Assad family of Syria are their best-known members. Latakia is one of the areas in which they live.

4. Jonathan Randal, *Osama: The Making of a Terrorist* (New York: Vintage, 2005), 53–56. As Randal remarked, families often hired "comely Alawi girls as maids, and many a Beirut male friend of my generation has pleasant memories of being introduced to the delights of the flesh thanks to them" (55). Randal's book is based on interviews with Usama bin Ladin's friends, family, and acquaintances. For a different view, see Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Knopf, 2006). Steve Coll's "Young Osama" in the December 12, 2005, *New Yorker* tells what was remembered about Usama's youth in Jiddah.
5. Like his brother Sayyid, Muhammad had been active in the Muslim Brotherhood and had been arrested and charged with terrorism, but, unlike his brother, he was allowed to leave Egypt. He had taken refuge in Saudi Arabia, where he had become a professor.
6. M. J. Gohari, *The Taliban: Ascent to Power* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 135.
7. Youssef Aboul-Enein, *The Late Sheikh Abdullah Azzam's Books* (West Point, NY: Combating Terrorism Center, US Military Academy, 2008).
8. Quran 9/39. I have translated only the relevant part of the verse.
9. Abdullah Azzam, "Defense of the Muslim Lands," *Religioscope,* February 1, 2002, http://english.religion.info/2002/02/01/document-defence-of-the-muslim-lands/. In chapter 1, Azzam quotes the fourteenth-century jurisconsult Taqi al-Din bin Taimiyah as saying, "The first obligation after proclamation of faith is the repulsion of the enemy aggressor."
10. Christopher Blanchard, *Al Qaeda: Statements and Evolving Ideology* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, updated July 9, 2007), 2.
11. He told of his war record in unbelievable terms, but, after hearing confirmation from a man who was apparently in Afghanistan with him, Randal was prepared to believe the essential fact that he had been in combat, whether or not he was as fearless as he later claimed to have been. Randal, *Osama,* 89.
12. Kenneth Katzman, *Al-Qaeda: Profile and Threat Assessment,* report no. RL33038 (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, August 17, 2005).
13. Azzam was killed by a bomb that exploded beneath his car. No one was ever charged, but everyone was blamed. Even Usama was named by some as the assassin. The more likely suspects are the CIA, the Mossad, and Jordanian agents. There had been several previous attempts to kill Azzam, which of one involved the mining of a mosque; had the explosives detonated, several hundred people would have died with him.
14. The campaign is brilliantly described in detail on the basis of Russian documents by British ambassador Rodric Braithwaite in *Afgantsy: The Russians in Afghanistan 1979–89* (London: Profile Books, 2011).
15. The tactics were not, of course, new. They had been employed throughout history. As I describe in my book *Violent Politics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2007), they were used successfully by the Spaniards against Napoleon's army, by the Yugoslavs and Greeks against the Wehrmacht, by the Filipinos and the Vietnamese against the Americans, and by the Algerians against the French. Each new episode started from a blank page: each successive group appeared to be unaware that others had gone before.
16. That was the phrase I wrote in the US National Policy Paper in 1962

(unpublished manuscript).

17. The Japanese took a more relaxed view, but the British had a major interest in preserving Kuwaiti independence. Saddam had nationalized their stake in Iraqi oil production, but they still had a major stake in Kuwait production. That stake gave them access to hard currency, the loss of which would have nearly crippled the English economy. They encouraged American action but were content to have the Americans play the lead role.
18. I have dealt with these issues and the crisis in general in my book *Understanding Iraq* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), ch. 4.
19. Abdel Bari Atwan, *The Secret History of al-Qaeda* (London: Saqi, 2006), 44 ff.
20. Their authority was represented by a sort of religious police officer known as a *mutawawi.*
21. I had known Sadiq al-Mahdi while we were both students at Oxford. Ironically, he was a descendant of the Mahdi, the religious leader who had fought the British. The decision to install a Muslim fundamentalist government was made under the influence of the Sudanese religious radical Hassan al-Turabi, who called an Islamic People's Congress to gather the leaders of Muslim groups from Africa and Asia in Khartoum in 1991.
22. As he told Abdel Bari Atwan. Atwan, *Secret History of al-Qaeda,* 47.
23. At about the same time, I also lived in Maadi, but we did not meet.
24. Owen Bowcott, "Torture Trail to September 11," *Guardian,* January 24, 2003. According to Bowcott, "Dr Zawahiri had been imprisoned and, according to friends, beaten frequently after the assassination of President Anwar Sadat in 1981. The humiliations—including, reportedly, the betrayal under torture of a fellow Islamist—marked him for life. Montasser al-Zayat, a lawyer who was imprisoned with Dr Zawahiri and wrote a damning biography of him, described how traumatic experiences during three years in prison transformed Dr Zawahiri from a relative moderate in the Islamist underground into a violent extremist." The Egyptian secret police arrested 1,500 people but missed Lieutenant Khalid Islambouli, who shot Sadat in October 1981.
25. Gohari, *Taliban,* 136. The fatwa proclaimed that " 'jihad against disbelievers who conquer Muslim lands' [is] a duty incumbent upon all believing Muslims." The fatwa was issued over the signatures of a Saudi (Usama bin Ladin), two Egyptians (Ayman al-Zawahiri and Yasir Rifai Ahmad Taha), a Pakistani (Shaikh Mir Hamzah), and a Bangladeshi (Fazlur Rahman).
26. Quoted in Atwan, *Secret History of al-Qaeda,* 53–54.
27. A memo from Assistant Secretary of State Karl F. Inderfurth to Secretary of State Madeline Albright, November 24, 1998, stated, "How we can persuade the Taliban to expel Usama bin Laden from Afghanistan to a country where he can be brought to justice or otherwise end or limit the threat he poses to U.S. interests." "1998 Missile Strikes on Bin Laden May Have Backfired," National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 253, Washington National Security Archive, posted August 20, 2008, http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB253/, document 10a. And a cable from the US embassy in Islamabad on November 28, 1998, reported that a senior spokesman from the Taliban forwarded to the US government a proposal on how to "expel bin Laden in a way that avoided the internal problems that the Taliban leadership feared." Ibid., document 11.
28. James Astill, "Strike One," *Guardian,* October 2, 2001; German ambassador Werner Daum, "Universalism and the West," *Harvard International Review* 23,

no. 2 (2006): 19. The pharmaceutical company sued for compensation but "the court dismissed the suit on the ground that 'the enemy target of military force' has no right to compensation for 'the destruction of property designated by the President as enemy war-making property.' " El-Shifa Pharmaceutical Industries Company and Salah El Din Ahmed Mohammed Idris, Appellants v. United States of America, Appellee, No. 07-5174 (D.C. Cir. 2010), decided June 8, 2010.

29. The authoritative US State Department Bureau of Intelligence and Research found on August 28, 1998, widespread "feelings of injustice and victimization [in the Arab world]—and growing conviction among Arab elites and masses alike that US policies prop up corrupt regimes; favor Israel at Arab expense; and are designed to divide, weaken and exploit the Arab world—are rooted in negative Arab perceptions of specific US policies. Bin Ladin rides this tide of opinion. Though few Arabs endorse his terrorism, many share at least some of his political sentiments." "1998 Missile Strikes on Bin Ladin," document 4, p. 1.

30. "Full Text: Bin Laden's 'Letter to America,' " *Guardian,* November 24, 2002. The attack on the World Trade Center was a retaliation for American bombings of Afghan, Iraqi, and Somali villages and towns, "because of injustices against the Lebanese and Palestinians by Israel and the United States" and the United States' "unspeakable hatred for Islam." "We have witnessed," Bin Ladin said, "the true crimes of those who call themselves humanists and claim to be defenders of freedom. . . . Those who lived under continuous US raids for the past months are aware of it." He was proud that al-Qaida had carried it out.

31. The October 7, 2001, cable was obtained by the National Security Archives and published on September 11, 2011, in "Secret U.S. Message to Mullah Omar: 'Every Pillar of the Taliban Regime Will Be Destroyed,' " National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 358, Washington National Security Archive, http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB358a/, document 16.

32. Ibid.

33. Documents made public by the National Security Archive on August 20, 2008: "A 400-page Sandia National Laboratories report on bin Ladin, compiled in 1999, includes a warning about political damage for the U.S. from bombing two impoverished states without regard for international agreement, since such action 'mirror imaged aspects of al-Qaeda's own attacks.' " See "1998 Missile Strikes on Bin Ladin," document 1, pp. 18–22.

34. Secretary Albright was answering a question on April 12, 1996, by Leslie Stahl on the CBS program *60 Minutes.*

35. Rahul Mahajan reported in " 'We Think the Price Is Worth It,' " *Fair: Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting,* November 1, 2001, that "a Dow Jones search of mainstream news sources since September 11 turns up only one reference to the quote—in an op-ed in the *Orange Country Register* (9/16/01). This omission is striking, given the major role that Iraq sanctions play in the ideology of archenemy Osama bin Ladin; his recruitment video features pictures of Iraqi babies wasting away from malnutrition and lack of medicine."

36. Al-Suri (sometimes operating under the name Umar Abd al-Hakim) is the subject of a very good biography by the Norwegian scholar Brynjar Lia entitled *Architect of Global Jihad: The Life of al-Qaida Strategist Abu Mus'ab al-Suri* (London: Hurst, 2007). For the quote, see 4.

37. Lia also translated al-Suri's analysis of previous tactics of insurgency and the reasons for their failure in "The Military Theory of the Global Islamic Resistance Call," and published what he considered al-Suri's main points in Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad,* 347 ff. Subsequent citations are from this translation of al-Suri's manual.
38. Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad,* 368.
39. Ibid., 368–369.
40. Ibid., 417.
41. Ibid., 350.
42. Ibid., 370.
43. John Rollins, *Al Qaeda and Affiliates: Historical Perspective, Global Presence, and Implications for U.S. Policy* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, January 25, 2011).
44. Lia, *Architect of Global Jihad,* 421.
45. See Montasser al-Zayyat, *The Road to Al-Qaeda: The Story of Bin Laden's Right-Hand Man,* translated from the Arabic edition published in Cairo by Dar Misr in 2002 (London: Pluto, 2004).
46. It is not known whether the Americans had help from the Pakistani intelligence service. That and other aspects of the raid are still in doubt. See Seymour Hersh, *The Killing of Osama bin Ladin* (London: Verso, 2016), first published as a series of articles in the *London Review of Books;* the review of Hersh's account by Ahmed Rashid, "Sy Hersh and Osama bin Laden: The Right and the Wrong," *New York Review of Books,* June 23, 2006; and Carlotta Gall, "Demonstration by Afghans Turns Violent," *New York Times Magazine,* May 12, 2005.
47. Fawaz A. Gerges was premature in announcing its fall. See his *The Rise and Fall of al-Qaeda* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 108 ff.
48. On the "far enemy," see Fawaz A. Gerges, *The Far Enemy: Why Jihad Went Global,* 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

CHAPTER 42: THE ISLAMIC STATE

1. Medieval Christian writers even charged that he was a "fallen cardinal" who had defected from the church. Later biographers ascribed to him fraud, hypocrisy, and mental illness.
2. I will here cite the translation done by William McCants under the title *The Management of Savagery* (Cambridge, MA: John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Harvard University, 2006). I have relied heavily on the text provided by William McCants in *The Believer,* Brookings Essay (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2015), and his *The ISIS Apocalypse* (New York: St. Martin's, 2015), and on the accounts written by Abdel Bari Atwan, *Islamic State* (London: Saqi, 2015), and Patrick Cockburn, *The Rise of Islamic State* (London: Verso, 2015).
3. Naji, *Management of Savagery,* 5.
4. Ibid., 6.
5. The use of the term "Taghut" is a reference to pre-Islamic pagan belief. The *tagut* were the idols Muhammad destroyed.
6. Naji, *Management of Savagery,* 7.
7. Ibid., 21.
8. Ibid., 3.

9. Stephen Walt estimated in "Why Do They Hate Us?," *Foreign Policy,* November 30, 2013, that the number killed by Americans over the previous thirty years is between three hundred thousand and one million.
10. Naji, *Management of Savagery,* 104.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid., 15.
13. Ibid., 3.
14. Ibid., 12.
15. Ibid., 23–24.
16. Ibid., 25.
17. Ibid., 18.
18. Ibid., 18–19.
19. Ibid., 31.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid., 32.
22. Ibid., 33.
23. Ibid., 48.

CHAPTER 43: TRUNKS AND TAILS

1. Dennis Jett, "These Ignorant Ambassadors," *Huffington Post,* April 28, 2014.
2. The book was published in English as *The Meursault Investigation* (New York: Other Press, 2015). See Claire Messud's review, "The Brother of the Stranger," *New York Review of Books,* October 22, 2015.
3. This is thanks in part to the writings of John Hope Franklin, my former colleague at the University of Chicago, and more broadly to Martin Luther King Jr., whose last lawyer was my cousin Lucius Burch.
4. "Comanche" is, ironically, a Ute Indian word meaning "enemy." No people ever called themselves the enemy.

CHAPTER 44: WHAT THE NORTH DID TO THE SOUTH

1. Letter of September 26, 1790, quoted in Lewis Namier, "King George III: A Study in Personality," in *Personalities and Powers* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1955), 45.
2. Speech of May 14, 1888, quoted in William Langer, *The Diplomacy of Imperialism, 1890–1902* (New York: Knopf, 1951), 77.
3. Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), 341.
4. Langer, *Diplomacy of Imperialism,* 539.
5. Shashi Tharoor, *Inglorious Empire: What the British Did to India* (London: Hurst, 2017), 150.
6. Ibid., xxii.
7. Uri Avnery, private communication with the author. Avnery was an admitted terrorist as a young man, fought in the 1948–1949 Arab-Israeli war, and was a member of the Israeli parliament, the Knesset.
8. Obtained under the Freedom of Information Act by the National Security Archives. See "1998 Missile Strikes on Bin Laden May Have Backfired,"

National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 253, Washington National Security Archive, posted August 20, 2008, http://nsarchive.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB253/, document 4, p. 1.

9. Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris: François Maspero, 1961), translated by Richard Philcox as *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove, 2004).
10. Max Fisher, "The Forgotten Story of Iran Air Flight 655," *Washington Post,* October 16, 2013. The article includes a photograph of Iranian children throwing flowers into the sea to commemorate the tragic event.

Glossary

Unless otherwise noted, terms are from the Arabic.

PREFERRED SPELLING	*MEANING*
Abd	Slave; used as a name with one of the attributes of God, e.g., Abd al-Karim, Abd al-Aziz, etc.
Abd al-Qadir	sometimes written “Abdul-Kader”
Aceh	Northeastern Sumatra, scene of guerrilla warfare
Alawi	Syrian ethnic group, offshoot of Shiism; sometimes spelled “Alawite”
Ali	Name; sometimes written “Aly”
Alim, pl. ulama	Educated (usually in religion) man, leader of community
Al-Nahda	Awakening; used for Arab renaissance
Amir	Commander, prince, governor; sometimes written “emir”
Amir al-mu’minin	Prince of the believers; title of caliph
Aqlar	Pl. of aql, the intelligentsia
Ar	Shame
Arabi	Arabic; sometimes written “Urabi”
Arabiyah	Arab nationalism
Ashkenazi	Jews, mainly from the east
Avar	Ottoman Turkish: a mountaineer, Caucasian
Ayan	Notables, members of the elite
Azad	Azadi: freedom; also name of a political party
Azhar	Islamic university in Cairo
Baath	Awakening; name of an Arab political movement
Badal	Badalo: vengeance
Bakhtiari	Name of a seminomadic tribe in Iran
Bangsa	Bangsamoro: nation
Melayu	Malaya Melayu: of Malaya
Moro	Bangsamoro: Muslim Philippine nationalism
Banu	Plural of “ibn,” used of members of a tribe
Baraka	God-given power to a saint
Bast	Bastı: a religious retreat
Bey	Turkish: a title given to a gentleman, aristocrat, or nobleman; also spelled “beg”

Sanskrit	brotherhood
bida	innovation
Ibn	contraction of “ibn,” son of
Imam al-Qaida	leader; also spelled “Osama ben Laden”
Boko	Nigerian: Westernization, “the fake way”
Boko Haram	Nigerian: Westernization is illegal; name of the Nigerian movement
Bolo	short of machete used by Filipino Muslim guerrillas as a weapon for suicide attacks; also called a “barong”
Bornu	language of Muslims northeast of Nigeria
Casbah	old town, best known as native quarter of Algiers
Chantre	a Turk
Copt	Egyptian Christian
Dubat	officered native troops in Somalia
Dalet	Hebrew: Plan D; name of the Zionist plan to destroy the Palestinian Arab community
Harijan	Hindi: untouchable, a virtual slave in Hinduism
Dar al-Islam	Muslim states, the North
Dar al-Salam	world, the zone of peace, the South
Datu	Tagalog-Filipino: nobleman
Dawah	Arabic-Iranian: the call; a Shiah movement
Dawlah	dynasty, the traditional concept in Islam of a state
Deobandi	the Deobandi order of Islam, the Deobandiyah
dhow	sailing ship used by Arab and Iranian merchants on the Indian Ocean
Dogra	Hindi and Punjabi: Hindu ethnic group, rulers of Kashmir, 1846–1947
Dungan	Chinese: ethnic Chinese converts to Islam; also spelled “Tungan”
faqih	legal expert
fatwa	religious ruling
fez	red, conical hat that replaced the turban in the nineteenth century and was replaced by a Western men’s hat in Turkey in 1927
fidai	warrior of the faith, aka “jihadi”; usually written in the plural (fidayin)
fidayin	warriors of the faith, aka “jihadis”; popularly written (in plural) as “fedayeen”
Fiqh	jurisprudence
Regulares	Indígenas Moroccan constabulary, like the sepoys of India
Rukwan	religious-nationalist youth movement
ghazi	warrior in style of warfare
Ghazi	Turkish: warrior
Grozny	Russian: dreadful or terrible; title of Ivan IV
guerrilla	Spanish: both irregular war and the person fighting it
Hadith	records of sayings or doings of the Prophet
hajj	Arabic-Algerian: hajj or pilgrimage

Hajj — Pilgrimage (to Mecca); short for “hajji”
Hajji — Pilgrim, a person who has prayed at Mecca
Han Chinese — Chinese: ethnic Chinese, as distinct from Huihui or Dungans, who are mainly Turks or Chinese Muslims
Harakat — Political movement
Haram — Forbidden, in Islamic law
Harki — Algerian militia force employed by the French
Hebrew — Yiddish: homeland, something less than a nation-state
Hijab — Covering dress for women
Hijra — Muhammad’s move to Madinah; beginning of Islamic calendar
Hizb — Party
Hizbullah — Political party
Hukbalahap — Communist-led anti-Japanese guerrillas in Malaysia
Hung Nu — Turco-Mongol people of Central Asia; also spelled “Xiongnu”; possibly related to the Huns
Huffaz — Keepers of the Quran by heart
Hui — Chinese: Muslims
Hukbalahap — Communist-led anti-Japanese Philippine guerrilla group
Ibn — Son of, member of (tribe)
Ikhwan — Brothers
Imam — Leader
Imam — Knowledge, usually religious learning
Imam — One who stands in front, a leader (of prayer) or a commander; one of the five, seven, or twelve divinely appointed leaders
Iran — Country, sometimes referred to as Persia
Irgun — Jewish terrorist group
Isnad — Line of transmission (of a hadith)
Jihad — Struggle; usually the English or French word is used
Jadid — New, used in Central Asia to refer to “new men”
Jahiliyah — Time of ignorance of the sunnah of Islam
Jamahiriyah — Republic
Jarh wa ta’dil — Authentication process for hadith
Jihad — Struggle; also holy war
Jihadi — Warrior of the Islamic faith
Jirga — Pashto: assembly
Jizya — Poll tax
Judenstaat — Yiddish: Theodor Herzl’s term for the Zionist objective, a Jewish state
Jungmin — Korean: people
Kafir — Unbeliever
Kamikaze — Japanese: Divine Wind
Kampong — Malay: village
Kanun — Albanian: Code of Honor
Kanun-i-shariat — Turkish: Code of Islamic Law
Kaum — Malay: people
Kazi — Judge; alternative spelling in English of “qadi”

kafir: unbeliever
karamah: honor
Kashmiriyah: the "way" of Kashmir
kataib: armed militants; used of Muslim Brothers and the Lebanese Christian militant force
Kazak: Turkish: a Central Asia Turkish people; sometimes written "Kazak"
Khan: Indo-Mongol: ruler; in Farsi, spelled "han"
khanqa: Sufi lodge
khalifat: caliphate
Korps: Javanese and other native troops used by Dutch in Indonesia, comparable to sepoys and Corpo Zaptié
lalla: Berber: female saint
laqab: attachment to a name indicating origin
Lehi: Hebrew: Jewish terrorist group, aka "the Stern Gang"
Majlis: supreme or national assembly
Mindanao: Philippine Muslim law code adapted from Shariah
Mountain Avar: Caucasian people
madhab: a branch or school of Islamic law
Medina: Arabian city; sometimes written "Medina"
madrassa: school, usually a religious school
Maghreb: where the sun sets, Morocco
Maharaja: Sanskrit: *maha;* Persian: *raja*
Mahdi: Muslim expected to return on Judgment Day
Majlis: assembly, parliament; sometimes written "Mejles"
mamluk: possessed; a slave who might also be a ruler
Maronite: Christian community of North Africa
Maronite: Christian community of Lebanon
matn: substance of a hadith
mehmandarlik: the right of refuge and duty of host
mihna: inquisition court
millet: Ottoman Turkish (Farsi, melli): religious/ethnic community or "nation"
minzu: Chinese: ethnic nation; similar to "millet"
Misaki: National pact called for by Atatürk
mobed: Farsi: equivalent of Arabic mullah, cleric, or teacher
Morisco: Spanish: a Spanish Muslim
Moro: Spanish: a Muslim; used for Filipino Muslims
muezzin: caller to prayer, the man who performs an action similar to that of church bells in Christian neighborhoods
mufti: religious official, judge
mufti: chief judge, head of religious establishment
Mohammedan: Older term for "Muslim"; sometimes written "Mohammadan"
mumin: true believer
mujahid, pl. mujahidin: sometimes written in plural as "mujahideen"

mujtahid	Arabic: religious man
mullah	Arabic: teacher; in Farsi, spelled “molla”
Muslim	Arabic: one who submits (to God), member of the Muslim community
Muwahhidun	Arabic: professed of Muslim faith; what the Wahhabis call themselves
Nakba	Arabic: disaster
Nang-o-namus	Pashto: code of honor
Naqshbandi	Sufi brotherhood
Naqshbandiyah	Sufi order, popular in Asia
Nurcus	Turkish: followers of Said Nursi
Nutuk	Turkish: Atatürk’s 1927 six-day-long speech laying the foundation of his rule of the Turkish Republic
-oğlu	Turkish: suffix meaning “son of”
Ottoman	Turkish: Osmanlu, the Turkish Empire and language
padishah	Persian: emperor
panchayat	Farsi: governing council
Pandit	Kashmiri: Hindu minority, mainly in Kashmir
Pashtunwali	Afghanistan’s pre-Islamic body of customs
pieds noirs	French: European colonists in Algeria
prau	Indonesian: sailing boat typical of the South China Sea
purdah	Farsi and Urdu: seclusion of women
qadi	Arabic: judge
qaida	Arabic: base (of operations); name of a militant Muslim organization
qanat	Persian: underground irrigation canal; also known in Turkish as “kerez”
qibla	Arabic: symbol of Hinduism, drawn on the forehead
qism	Arabic: subdivision of a tribe
qawmiyat	Arabic: nationalism, as distinct from wataniyah
qazi	Farsi: judge
Qing	Chinese: Chinese dynasty (aka Manchus)
Raj	Persian: royal; used of the Indian state under British rule
Rashidun	Arabic: guided; used of the first four caliphs
Rasul	Arabic: Messenger; the title of Muhammad in the Quran
Rawaj	Pashto: Afghanistan’s traditional code of law
Rawi	Arabic: writer of poetry
Reconquista	Spanish: Christian conquest of Iberian Peninsula
renegados	Spanish: renegades, European converts to Islam
Rishiism	Kashmiri: name for Sufism
Sahara	Arabic: name of the Jewish community that had lived under Muslim rule
sahabi	Arabic: companion; generation of the Prophet
sahih	Arabic: valid; used to refer to authenticated hadith
Salihiyah	Sufi brotherhood
sarf	Arabic: grammar
Sanhaji	Berber: followers of the Sanusiyah order
Sanusiyah	Sufi order founded by Muhammad bin Ali al-Sanusi
sati	Sanskrit-Hindi: Hindu practice of burning widows

Sayyid — Noble man, descendant of the Prophet
Seljuk — Turkish: Turkish tribe and sultanate
Melayu — Malay; nationalism
sepoy — Anglo-Indian version of Turkish “sipahi”
Shahnameh — Persian poem
Shiism — Muhammad, martyr
sharif — Honorable man, leader, descendant of the Prophet
shame — Pashto: shame
Sharif — Muslim religious figure, Ottoman-appointed governor of the holy cities of Arabia
Shiite — Partisan (of Caliph Ali), follower of Shiism
Shiism — Islamic sect
Sikhism — Holy; theism
Shoah — Hebrew: holocaust
shura — Arabic: assembly; used by Panshiris in Afghanistan; equivalent to “jirga” and “ulus”
Sikh — Follower of the sect of Hinduism originating in the Punjab
Ottoman — Ottoman Turkish: soldier, cavalryman, trooper
sipahi — Persian: military encampment
Sudra — Sanskrit: untouchable
Sufi — Mystic, member of an order of mendicants like those of Saint Francis of Assisi; “suf” means “wool”
Sulu — Island archipelago in the southern Philippines
sunnah — Way; the custom of a group
Sunnah — The right way, in Islam
Sunni — Orthodox Muslim
Sura — Verse, a chapter of the Quran
Tablighi — Missionary; offshoot of Deobandi Sufis
tafsir — Commentary on the Quran
Taghdad — Baghdad; republic
talib, pl. taliban — Arabic: student, usually a religious student
Taliban — Afghan and Pakistani militant group
taqiyya — Dissimulation; protective practice of Shiis
tariqa — Way; used to refer to a Sufi order
Tatar — Turkish people of Crimea; often incorrectly spelled “Tartar”
Tawhid — Monotheism, essence of Islam
Spanish Foreign Legion — Tercio de Extranjeros
Tuareg — Arabic
tirailleurs — Senegalese troops used by French, similar to Indian sepoys
Turkistan — Turkish: translator; name of a journal
Türkçülük — Turkism
Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi — Turkish: Grand National Assembly
Turkism — Turkish nationalism or “Turkishism”
Berbers — Berber tribal Muslims of the Sahara

Ulama: Muslim scholars; plural of “alim”

Umma: the community (of Muslims)

Umayyad: Arab caliphate; also spelled “Omayyed”

Usul: principles

Uyghur: Central Asian Turkish people, pronounced “wigur”

Wahhabi: follower of Wahhabiyah Sunni sect

Wahhabiyah: Sunni sect founded by Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab

Watan: village; later used to refer to the territorial nation-state

Watanniyah: state nationalism, as distinct from qawmiyah

Xinjiang: “northwest,” mainly Turkish Central Asian province of China

Xiongnu: Turco-Mongol tribe, possibly akin to the Huns; also spelled “Hsiung-nu”

Yan: Yan’uza: “brothers,” the Nigerian affiliate of the Muslim Brothers

Yarim padishah: “half emperor”

Yedişehir: Seven Cities, the oasis cities of the Tarim Basin in Central Asia

Zadeh: Farsi suffix meaning “son of”

Zakat: social service tax Muslims were required to pay

Zawiyah: Berber Sufi lodge, redoubt, monastery; similar to the khanaqa of Turkish Central Asia

Zunghars: Mongol Buddhist tribesmen wiped out by the Qing Chinese and replaced by the Kazakhs

Acknowledgments

This book is the result of some seventy years of formal research and informal exchanges with hundreds of colleagues, friends, and acquaintances. I could not have conceived it without their help. I cannot thank them all, but I do want to record my debt to a few.

I owe my late brother George Polk first place because, with the inspiring help of my mother, he got me off a horse in Texas and started me on the quest that led to this book. It was due to him that I visited Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Turkey in 1946. My first patron was John Marshall of the Rockefeller Foundation, who gave me the time to dig deeply into Arabic, Turkish, and Islamic affairs when practically no Americans were studying such recondite subjects and few American institutions were hospitable to them.

In Baghdad, Adib al-Jadir and Sumaya Zahawi led me into the intricacies of Arab nationalism. In Lebanon, I was fortunate to know Emrys and Stella Peters, who gave me the new perspective of social anthropology, which enlightened my approach to history, while Michael Adams, John Cooley, and Patrick Seale enlightened me about what was happening around me. My guides to Afghanistan were Louis and Nancy Dupree and Abdul Keyeum; in Egypt Hassan Fathy, Ibrahim Shayyeb, and Zaki al-Nagar added new dimensions to my appreciation of Islamic culture. In Iran, I was swept into the Farmanfarmaian family.

At Oxford, I acquired literacy in Arabic and Turkish under the stern eye of Professor H. A. R. Gibb, then undoubtedly the world's greatest orientalist, and dipped deeper into anthropology under the influence of Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard. Back at Harvard, I plunged into the new world of area studies with a wonderful band of friends including Edmund Asfour, Richard Barnet, Crane Brinton, Y. T. Feng, Stanley Hoffman, Edwin Reischauer, and Speros Vryonis.

In Washington, I found another "university" in the remarkable collection of people in the Kennedy administration. Chester Bowles, McGeorge Bundy, John Campbell, Fowler Hamilton, Kenneth Hansen, Roger Hilsman, Hume Horan, Thomas Hughes, Sherman Kent, Robert Komer, Walt Rostow, James Spain, and Roscoe Suddarth jumped with me into the bear pit of foreign affairs. Standing slightly aloof but always helpful were Senators Church, Eagleton, Fulbright, Humphrey, and McGovern and Congressman John Brademas.

After my stint in government, I moved to Chicago, where, with the connivance of President Edward Levi and Professors Leonard Binder and William McNeill, I became professor of history at the university. Two years later, after forming the Adlai Stevenson Institute of International Affairs, I worked almost daily with fellows including Marjorie Benton, former governor Pat Brown of California, former British ambassador to the UN Lord Caradon, urban planner Hassan Fathy, historian Saul Friedländer, commentator on presidential politics David Halberstam, former deputy director of the Bureau of the Budget Kenneth Hansen, political commentator Murray

Kempton, author William Mares, former vice president of the Inter-American Development Bank and former mayor of Bogota Enrique Peñalosa Camargo, soon-to-be Russian prime minister Evgeni Primakov, former commander of the UNEF General Indar Jit Rikkye, social activist Clyde Ross, former deputy minister of finance of the Sudan Abdul Hafeez al-Rufaie, specialist on counterinsurgency Neil Sheehan, psychiatrist and specialist on violence Anthony Storr, head of the UN Environment Program (UNEP) Maurice Strong, former UN secretary general U Thant, and a wonderful staff headed by Barbara Fields and Kitty Friedheim.

In and out of government, I inherited my brother's colleagues or otherwise got to know some of the great journalists of our time, including Said Aburish, Uri Avnery, Charles Glass, Johannes Gross, Sy Hersh, Peter Jennings, Edward R. Murrow, Bill Pfaff, Jon Randal, Eric Rouleau, Peter Scholl-Latour, Eric Severeid, and Howard K. Smith.

The many friends who shared the trials, travails, and joys of my long career include Badia Abu Shaqra, Bill and Carole Bailey, Dick and Anne Barnet, Cooper Blankenship, Landrum Bolling, John Campbell, Bill Carey, Raimondo Craveri, Louis and Nancy Dupree, Monique Duroc-Danner, Joseph Evans, Khodadad Farmanfarmaian, Hugh Faulkner, John Filer, Amr and Nahed Fouad, Chas Freeman, Cyrus Ghani, Bill Goodfellow, Sir David and Lady Gore-Booth, Walter Gropius, Carl Hahn, Pat Harvey, Hume Horan, Albert Hourani, Ismet Kitanni, Dennis and Elizabeth Kucinich, Alexandros Lykourezos, Bill Mares, George McGovern, Michael and Fawzia McKinnon, Dick Nolte, Larry Perkins, Bill Price, George Roberts, Ghassan Salamé, Herbert and Rita Salzman, Raja Sidawi, Arthur and Rita Silverman, Kushwant Singh, Sion Soleimani, Dwight Starr, Roscoe Suddarth, Dominque Sumian, Nikki Thomas, William Whitbeck, Zaki Yamani, and Nadia Younes.

Bill Frucht of Yale University Press, Ian Shapiro of the Yale faculty, Sterling Lord, Milbry Polk, Eliza Polk, Nikki Thomas, Mary Tiegreen, Brian Ostrander, and Ashley Moore played key parts in bringing the book to life.

Last, but far from least, my wife, Elisabeth, and my children, Milbry, Eliza, George, Zelmira, and Alison, have enlivened the years and assuaged the occasional hurt.

As Larry McMurtry has one of his characters say in his *Lonesome Dove,* my life has been "a hell of a party." I have enjoyed (nearly) every minute. And I am grateful to you all.

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